

SOME THINGS THAT ARE PRECIOUS

by John M. Alber, Pastor
Introduction

This old world offers some precious things to its inhabitants. Such things as food, shelter, company and various other things. When God Almighty created this old world, He saw to it that man would have at his disposal all the raw materials he would need to live. With a little work on his part and some vision, man is capable of living very comfortably.



JOHN ALBER

If life was nothing more than just that, (however it isn't), man would have little to live for because, man is born into this

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THE THEORY OF SOUL SLEEP

Text: "For in death there is no remembrance of thee" (Psalm 6:5). Allow me to pose a question: "Is there life apart from Christ?" This, my friend, is one of the chief arguments used to support the theory of soul sleep--the belief that the dead sleep until the resurrection morning. Some conjecture that only believers will then be raised from the dead because there is no life apart from Christ. According to this view, sinners pass into oblivion at death.

Kinds of life: "But, is there life apart from Christ?" This is a loaded question. Certainly God is

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Foolish words can never be unsaid.

GOD IS ANGRY

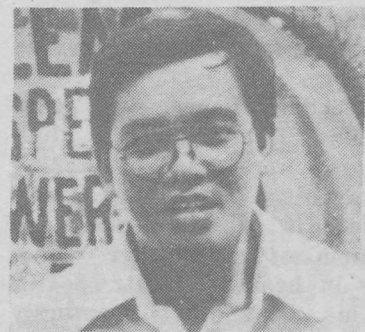
by Velmer B. Paler
Toril Davao City
Philippines

"God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day" (Psa. 7:11).

Wickedness of man is the very reason God reveals His anger. Our text is very clear that because of the wickedness of men God declared His wrath.

God is angry with those people who are ignoring His goodness and the gospel offered. When I consider how the goodness of God is abused by mankind, I cannot help but say, "The greatest miracle in the world is the patience of God and His mercy to an ungrateful world." If a king has an enemy get one of his towns, he does not send them provisions, but will do anything he can do to starve them. But the

great God, who could speak all wicked men into destruction, bears with them and daily maintains them. But how about you, sinners? Do you think you can escape from God? God is angry with you, and His anger is kindled against you, and nothing is so terrible as when His wrath takes fire in the burning fierceness and fury against you.



VELMER B. PALER

"...God is angry with the wicked every day." I felt led to preach this message. I shall endeavor with prayer in my heart not only to convince those unconverted sinners, but also to let them know and realize and feel through the conviction of the Holy Spirit that He may bring them to a sense of a fearful misery of being a sinner, and I hope the Spirit draws you to the saving knowledge of His grace.

First of all, what it is when God is angry with you. As I proceed to this point, I shall unfold from God's quiver of the misery of the wicked men which are not converted. Let me tell you that while you are in the state of unconvertedness and wickedness God is against you.

The infinite God is against you. His face is against you. (Continued on Page 6, Col. 5)

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"To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them"—Isaiah 8:20.

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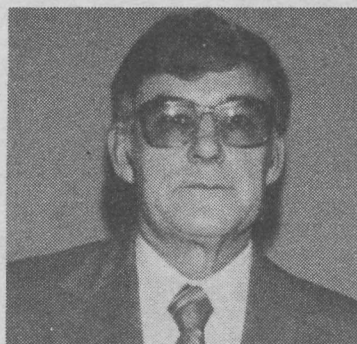
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ALWAYS THE SAME

by Ray Brown

"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever" (Heb. 13:8). This verse of Scripture is truly for the saint of God. It is the most blessed assurance that the Lord Jesus Christ is always the same. God never changes. In Job, Chapter 23 the Word of God tells us that God is in one mind. You can also read about it in Malachi 3:6, where God said, "For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed". In other words He is telling them if He had changed they would be consumed. But God doesn't change. God loves you today, and God

loves you tomorrow. God's love is an eternal love; it never changes. Our love changes, and our attitude changes from day to day as we get older in body. God is not plagued with time. There is not a wrinkle upon the brow of



RAY BROWN

God or upon the brow of eternity. God is the same and in one mind. We should thank God for it because we sin and we fail God. We come short of the glory of God many times in our life. We can be disappointed in our friends, neighbors, brothers and sisters in Christ, but we can lift our head above the chaotic condition of this old world. We can look up and have hope and faith in the one that we know who is perfect; the sovereign God of this universe. We can raise our heads and look up and know that we have one who never changes. He is the same. We can go to Him and take our petitions and prayers to Him. (Continued on Page 3, Col. 3)

The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor Joseph M. Wilson

WHEN GOD SAYS NO, Part I

"And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (II Cor. 12:7-10).

I was preaching in a distant city. After the service a grandmother asked me to pray for a grandchild who was critically ill. She gave me a copy of a letter that the parents had sent to many people seeking prayer for the child. In this letter, the parents said words to the effect of, "We know that God will heal our child." That may sound like a tremendous expression of faith, but I thought to myself, "What if this child dies? How will that affect the faith of these young parents?" I prayed for the child. I prayed for the parents even more. I do not know the outcome of this matter. I gave much thought to this matter of what unanswered

prayer, especially when the one praying was so certain of an answer, would do or might do to the faith of such a person. This led me to study and prepare this sermon.

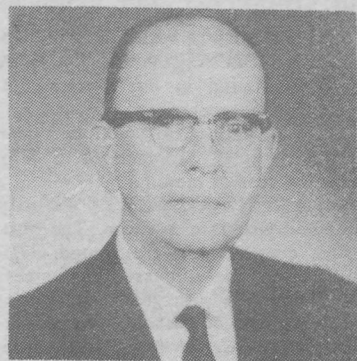
Unanswered prayer is one of the great disappointments, problems, and sorrows of many a believer's life. An old adage says something like this, "God always answers prayer; sometime He says yes, sometimes no, and sometimes wait awhile." There may well be some truth in this, but it also sounds somewhat like a "cop-out" in dealing with unanswered prayer. I am not accepting this, using this, or dealing with this. (Continued on Page 2, Col. 1)

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JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES, ARE THEY RIGHT OR WRONG

E.G. COOK
(NOW IN GLORY)

I doubt very much that any group of people in all the world have more zeal than the Jehovah's Witnesses have. Even Roman Catholics fall far short of them when it comes to zeal. You, no doubt, have seen them as they go from door to door in all kinds of weather. And it is hard indeed to get one of their workers to take



"no" for an answer. So, if it be zeal that God is looking for, surely He is pleased to see these people at their work.

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TITHING

Part II

"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (Mal. 3:10).

Down deep in the heart of every Christian there is undoubtedly the conviction that he ought to tithe. There is an uneasy feeling that this is a duty which has been neglected, or, if you prefer it, a privilege that has not been appropriated. Both are correct. Possibly there are some who soothe themselves by saying, "Well, other Christians do not tithe." And maybe there are others who say, "But if tithing be obligatory in this present dispensation, why are the preachers silent upon the subject?" My friends, they are silent on a good many subjects today; that does not prove anything.

In the previous section of this article the attempt was made to show three things: first, that tithing existed among the people of God long before the law was given at Sinai, and that in the brief record we have of that early history we learn that Abraham, the father of the faithful, gave tithes unto Melchizedek, the priest of the Most High God, and that Jacob, when he had that revelation from the Lord on his way out to Padanaram, promised to give a tenth unto God. Second, we saw that when the law was given the tithe was definitely and clearly incorporated in it, but, like almost everything else in that law, Israel neglected it, until, in the days of Malachi, we find Jehovah expressly telling His people that they had robbed Him. In the third (Continued on Page 8, Col. 3)

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WHEN GOD

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ing with this in this sermon. Sometimes our prayers are not answered because of personal failures in our lives or in our prayers. This is a wide and important field of study, but I am not dealing with this in this sermon. What I am dealing with in this sermon is the following: When so far as we know, everything between us and God is all right, when the subject of prayer is a legitimate one, when so far as we know, we have met all the conditions for answered prayer - and God says no; He does not answer our prayer by giving us that for which we pray. This is the only part of the matter of prayer that I deal with here.

There are many blessings of prayer. Praise God for them all. I would not rob anyone of the wonderful blessings of prayer. I do not want to diminish the value and blessing of prayer in anyone's estimation. I just want to be honest with this subject and to be of help to others.

Doubtless, every true Christian has had many answers to prayer. Oh, the blessedness of this! To go humbly to the throne of grace, present a serious petition to the God of all grace and power, and then to have a distinct, clear, real, definite answer to that prayer is one of the greatest of the blessings of the Christian life. I am sure that you have had experiences like this if you are a true child of God. Most of us have had many such, for which we humbly praise our God. Each answer encourages us in our prayer lives. Oh, that we might all have more and more of these in the

future. Answered prayer is an unanswerable argument for and proof of the existence, love, and power of our God. May I solemnly and seriously say that if you profess Christ, and you have never known a real and definite answer to prayer; you need to seriously examine the ground of your hope of salvation. Answered prayer is surely an evidence of genuine salvation. Had I professed Christ for several years, and had never known a genuine answer to prayer; I would seriously wonder if I had ever been saved. I would not unduly alarm you, I would not seek to quench any true hope; but I consider the matter of never having a real answer to prayer to be very serious. Well, I am sure that most of my readers have had such answers,



Joe Wilson

and I pass to the next matter.

Sometimes, our prayers are not answered. My text records one such case, at least where the specific thing asked for was not granted. I am sure that all of us have had experiences when our prayers have not been answered. My oldest boy was very, very sick. I prayed, oh, so earnestly. I prayed persistently. I examined my life. I confessed my sins. So far as I knew I met the conditions for answered prayer. I was so very sincere. Never in my life had I prayed as I prayed then. I wanted my boy to live. I pled with God to let him live. My boy died. My prayer was not answered. God did not give me the thing that I had prayed so earnestly about. Suppose that I had told others I knew God was going to heal my boy? Suppose I had believed with all my heart that God would heal him? Oh, what a faith shattering experience this would have been.

I once preached a sermon on, "Does Prayer Change Things?" Of course, I gave a negative answer to this question. One woman said to me afterward, that when I started preaching she was very upset by my apparent answer, and thought there would then be no use in praying. She said that before I got through, she saw most clearly that my negative answer was and necessarily must be true. I said to her something like this, "You may have been shocked and disturbed by my negative answer, but suppose you believed that prayer did change things, that you had a child who was sick, that you believed prayer could change things and secure the health of that child, that the child died; oh, how shocking that would have been." She saw the point at once, in fact, had already seen it, and had agreed with my message. My friend, I do not want to shake your confidence in prayer. I want to be of help to you. I believe that we all have experiences with the problem of unanswered prayer - even when everything seems right in our prayer and in our lives; I want to help in that. Unanswered prayer can be exceedingly hurtful and disturbing; a storm for faith in

God and confidence in prayer.

Connected with this we need to study the question of seemingly unlimited prayer promises in the Bible - one might call them blank check promises. "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Matt. 7:7) is such a promise. It seems to be unlimited. It seems to say that one (whoever or whatever he might be) can ask for anything (whatever it might be) for any purpose, and he will receive it. Yet, we all know that we have asked for things we did not receive. This verse is going to require some explaining for it to fit with the facts of our unanswered prayers.

"Again, I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 18:19). This is another seemingly unlimited prayer promise. I was a young preacher. I was in a revival meeting in the church I was a member of at that time. A dear mother, whom I knew well, leaned forward to me, showed me this verse, and asked me to pray with her that her son would be saved that night. We both agreed to ask for this, and we prayed for this. Her son was not saved that night. Doubtless, many Christians have had experiences similar to this. I have known people to state that they have agreed to pray for certain things, and that on the authority of this verse, they knew those things would be done. They accepted it by faith. Maybe it will be done. I hope so. But what if it is not done? That is, at least, a possibility, and has often been a reality.

John 14:14 is another such seemingly unlimited promise, "If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it." There surely seems to be no strings attached to this promise. It seems to say that we can ask for anything, and that it will be done. My friend, I want to state just now that I believe the Bible; I surely do. I have no doubt but that every Word is inspired of God and is certainly true. I do not want to rob anyone of the preciousness of these verses of Scripture. I surely do not want to shake anyone's faith in the Bible or confidence in prayer. But, brother and sister, these promises just do not work the way some seem to think they should. Saved people do ask for things they do not receive. They do join in agreement with others and pray for things that are not done. They do ask for things in the name of Jesus, and He does not do those things. This is just so. We have, doubtless, all experienced unanswered prayers. What is the answer to this problem? Is the Bible false? Of course not; it is the inspired and true Word of God. Is prayer useless? No, prayer is a great blessing in many ways, and is a means of obtaining things from God. The answer is that we must set these and similar prayer promises in the totality of the teaching of the Bible on prayer. We cannot take one promise out of the context of all that the Bible says about prayer, and expect it to infallibly and always work regardless of what other Scriptures teach. Now, to my subject, "When God Says No."

When God says no, it is always because it is not His will

to answer that prayer. "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him" (I John 5:14-15). I wish you would read this Scripture many times and study it carefully. I consider this Scripture to state the controlling principle

as to all answered and unanswered prayer. His "will" here relates to the eternally predestinated purpose and plan of God. God has predestinated everything that will come to pass. If we ask anything in harmony with that it will be answered. If we ask for anything contrary to that, it will not be answered. God will not, absolutely will not, change His pur-

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FROM THE EDITOR

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life..." (John 3:36). I am not trying to get to heaven. The phone rang in my office early this morning. A woman was calling to ask my advice about a problem in her life. After listening to her story, and giving her some advice to the best of my ability; we got into a friendly discussion relative to some teachings of her (Free-Will Baptist) church (?) and mine. The subject quickly reached the matter of the eternal security of the saved and the consequent assurance of eternal heaven. I knew, of course, that she did not believe the first of these, and consequently, could not have the latter. She weakly tried to assure me that some of the people in her church (?) did know they were going to heaven, but I held fast to the fact that, believing their doctrine of losing one's salvation, they could not possibly know they were going to heaven. It is impossible to believe you can lose your salvation and that you are sure of going to heaven. The two things are so necessarily and evidently contradictory that only a thoughtless person could even claim to believe them both.

This lady kept telling me that we were both striving for heaven; we were both trying to get to heaven. She repeated these and similar statements many times. I told her that I was not trying to get to heaven, and I am not. You might ask me, "Don't you want to go to heaven?" Of course I do, but I am not trying to get to heaven. I am not striving to make heaven my home.

When the Lord first saved me I was in a Holiness church (?). Oh, I was so glad that God had saved me. I rejoiced greatly in this. But I was a babe in Christ and knew very little. The church (?) I was in taught that one could lose his salvation. Oh, I was so glad I was saved. I did not want to lose this salvation. I wanted to go to heaven. But no one could ever know for sure that he was going to heaven until he got there, for he might stay saved until his dying day, and lose salvation just before dying, and go to hell. What a horrible doctrine is this; but I did not at the time know any better. I did not know if I would go to heaven or not, but I sure was trying.

Praise the Lord, He delivered me from all this. After nearly two years of this, the Lord used John chapter six to show me the wonderful truth of "Once Saved, Always Saved." I will never get over the thrill and joy of that day. I often say that this was the second greatest blessing God ever gave me. I learned that I had everlasting life, that I would never perish in hell, that the same grace that saved me to start with would keep me saved, and that I was as sure of heaven as if I were already there. Glory to God! Praise the Lord forevermore.

From that day to this I have never tried to go to heaven. I am trusting completely in the Lord Jesus Christ to take me to heaven. I am not working, striving, or trying to get to heaven. I am washed in the blood of Christ. I am saved forever. I have everlasting life. I will never perish. Nothing can separate me from the love of God in Christ Jesus my Lord. I am sure and certain for heaven.

I am not a Hardshell; I know I am saved. I am not a "falling from grace" heretic, I know I am saved forever - eternally secure - once saved, always saved. Like David, I know that I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. I am not one of that crowd who all wonder, if they are saved. I do not remember the last time I had any real, lengthy time of doubting whether or not I was saved. I give God the glory. He has saved me. I am saved forever. I know I am going to heaven.

As I talked with this woman, I really felt sorry for her and the members of her church. They will never know if they are going to heaven or not until they get there - or get to hell. They are striving and trying to get to heaven. They say they are saved today, but not one of them is, or can be, sure he will be saved tomorrow. They say they know today that they are on the way to heaven, but not a one of them knows whether or not he will get there. They are trying to get to heaven, but don't know if they will make it or not. Some of them may be saved, and if they are, they will make it to heaven; but they will never in this life know the blessed joy and sweet assurance that they are going to heaven. "Once Saved, Always Saved" is as true for them, if they are saved, as it is for us who believe it; but they will never know the sweet joy and blessed peace this truth gives. I really feel sorry for them.

As I finished talking with this woman, I wondered if she was really saved. I hope she is. I have prayed for her today that, if she is not saved, God will save her. But she talked so much about works, about striving, and about trying to get to heaven. Oh, I do wonder is anyone really saved - is really trusting in Jesus Christ - who talks so much about works. Well, I will not judge her as to this. I will say that her case is a sad one. She tells how hard she is trying, how fearful she is of failing, and knows nothing of the great joy of blessed assurance of eternal salvation. I feel sorry for her.

No, I am not trying to get to heaven. I want to go to heaven. I am going to heaven. I know I am going to heaven. But it is not - not any of it - of my trying and doing. It is by the grace of God, the blood of Jesus, and the power of the Holy Spirit. I am not trying to get to heaven. How miserable that would be - trying, trying, and trying - but never know until I got there or didn't get there. I am not trying to get to heaven, but I am trusting Jesus to get me there. Praise the Lord!

WHEN GOD

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pose even to answer the prayers of His children. It is as simple as this. Please read these last statements again and again, for they contain the principle that controls all answered and unanswered prayer. They constitute the most important part of the answer to the question involved in my subject. God has predestinated all things. If we pray for any of those things, our prayers will be answered. If we pray contrary to those things, our prayers will not be answered.

Many people make much of a man-made motto, "Prayer Changes Things." Surely, those who glibly speak this do not think what they are saying. I can think of few things that would be more destructive to real confidence in God, to true religion, or to the whole universe than this. If a man will really think this motto through, he will say, "Thank God, it is not true." A God who can be changed by the prayers of man is as bad, if not worse, than no god at all. If I think this through, I will realize that I would never, never, never want God to make Himself subject to my prayers in totality. How big such a motto makes man, and how little it makes God. God would have to change back and forth many times a day if this motto be true. What a dilemma this would place God in. One man is praying for rain for his garden while another prays for no rain so he can paint his house. Poor God, what will He do? How can He answer both prayers? One prays for the election of his preferred candidate while another prays for the election of the other candidate. What can God do? God has determined that Babylon will defeat Israel and take Judah captive. Many in Judah are praying that this will not be. But God has already prophesied that it will be. Shall He put Himself at the mercy of those who pray unto Him, and change His plan and prophecy for them? My beloved friend, God cannot change or be changed, therefore it is next to blasphemy to suggest that "Prayer Changes Things." You will wonder what good it does to pray if prayer does not change things. I hope that the totality of this message (which I now see will take two issues at least) will answer that.

I have said that the eternal purpose of God is the controlling principle of all answered and unanswered prayer. Let us look into this further. We often do not know what God's will is. We often cannot pray according to God's will because that will is hidden from our sight. We often, more often than not, must humbly pray, "Thy will be done." Let us look at another Scripture in this connection. "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God" (Rom. 8:26-27). We do not know what we should pray for because we do not know what God's eternally predestinated will is. We know that God has

power to answer our prayer, but we do not know if it is His will to do so. The Holy Spirit helps us in this part of our prayer life. He moves in our souls and leads us in our prayer requests. Oh, it is so important that we walk in the Spirit, are yielded to the Spirit, and pray in the Spirit. The Holy Spirit knows what God's eternally predestinated will is. He leads us to pray according to this. He puts it in and on our heart to pray according to this.

The Holy Spirit will never, never lead us to pray for that which is contrary to the eternal predestination of God. Every prayer that the Holy Spirit leads us to pray will be answered, it surely will. The Father approves (a meaning of "knoweth") of what is in the mind of the Spirit (that which the Spirit moves us to pray) because the Holy Spirit leads us to pray according to the will of God.

Some things we know are the will of God for He has revealed that portion of His eternal predestination to us. We can pray with the utmost confidence about these things. There are other things about which we do not know God's will. We cannot pray in total faith that these things will be granted. The prayer of faith relates to the known will of God. One cannot pray in faith that God will do that about which he does not know what God's will is. Faith is taking God at His Word, and there are many objects of prayer about which God has not given His Word. We must often pray, "If it be thy will." In fact, much of our praying must be with this attitude - not with total assurance that it will be done, but in humble submission to whether, or not it is God's will.

We can pray with faith in the power of God. He is, "able to do exceeding abundantly above, all that we ask or think" (Eph. 3:20). We know that our mind cannot conceive, neither can our tongue frame a prayer that is beyond the power of God to answer. We can always pray with faith in the love of God, for we know that He loves us beyond measure, and will always do what is best for us. We can pray with faith in the wisdom of God, for we know that He is all wise. But we cannot always pray in faith in the will of God, for we do not know what that will is. We know that God can do what we ask. We do not know that He will do what we ask. We must often pray, "If it be thy will."

This does not do away with the need, blessing, or efficacy of prayer. It simply tells us the truth about prayer. It explains to us why sometimes our prayers are not answered. It sets prayer in its true and proper position. It puts a praying man and a prayer hearing God in proper relationship to one another. If we will think on this a while, we will understand that it must be this way, and we will acquiesce willingly and gladly therein. Proper thinking on this matter will lead to the understanding that all prayer must be subject to the will of God, and cause one to rejoice that it is so. No right thinking, humble, Spirit-taught believer will ever desire that God place Himself at the beck and call, or the whim of any man's praying. It is best for all concerned that God's will govern the matter of answered and unanswered prayer. We will, God willing, continue this in our next issue. For now,

please know that the eternally predestinated will of God is the controlling principle as to answered and unanswered prayer as stated in I John 5:14-15.

ALWAYS

(Continued from Page 1)

We can trust in the faithfulness of God, because let God be true and every man a liar. So Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

When I think about Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today, and forever; I think about yesterday. I'm looking back beyond yesterday and many yesterdays to nearly two thousand years ago when Jesus Christ died for me on the cross of Calvary. So yesterday He died for me. Yesterday He left the holy City, carrying His cross and walked up Calvary's Hill. There He was stripped naked, and nails were driven through His hands and through His feet. There He was nailed on a cross, dropped in a hole, and hung between heaven and earth. Many of the traditional writers believe there was around fifty thousand people that walked by and looked at the Lord Jesus on that cross. They murmured and called Him all kinds of dirty names as He hung naked, before the world.

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (II Cor. 5:21). I was sin to Christ and He was my righteousness. In other words, He became my sin sacrifice, my atonement, and my interceder before God. He was my substitute when He hung on that cross of Calvary nearly two thousand years ago. When I think about yesterdays I want to think about the cross of Calvary. I want to think about how Jesus Christ hung and suffered anguish and torment on that cross of Calvary. All of my sins were placed upon His precious body there on the tree. He hung and suffered under my guilt. Dying for my sins and taking my name to Calvary with Him, and there He bowed his head and died as my sin bearer. He died as my substitute because of the holy righteousness and justice of Almighty God.

"MOREOVER, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (I Cor. 15:1-3).

So I believe we are saved by the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The yesterdays of our life and the period of our time soon will be gone. The sun will be going down and the shadows will be falling across the world and our life is just as a shadow, James said. Our time is short upon this earth. I believe we are living in the Saturday eve of time of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. "Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me; because I live, ye shall live

also" (John 14:19).

Paul said in Galatians 2:20 "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me"

Jesus Christ's love was so great that it embraced me, for God so loved that He gave His Son. The love that went out and embraced His Son embraced me, because I was in my substitute. When He died for me and identified himself with me, my sins were on Him upon the cross of Calvary. Yes, He lived for me. In other words Jesus Christ rose from the dead. He came forth victoriously from the grave. Death and hell could not hold the Lord Jesus Christ. After seventy-two hours He came forth from the grave. Today the Lord Jesus Christ lives for me. He broke the chains of death and hell in the grave that I might have victory. I was set free and live today by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. I know that I live in Him. I know that I walk in Him. I know that my very being is in the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. The yesterdays are gone and today is the day of salvation. God's time is all time. God is in yesterday, today, and also in tomorrow. But we may never see tomorrow. We might wake up in the presence of God in another world. Jesus Christ lives today. Jesus Christ lives that I might live. He came forth from the grave that I might live. He conquered death and hell and the grave that I might not have torment and fear. That I might be a child of God and live eternally and forever in the presence of a thrice Holy God.

Many people say God is dead. Revelation 1:18 says, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."

Yes, Jesus Christ lives. He lives in the hearts and lives of all of God's people. We get our strength and substance from the Lord Jesus Christ. We live in Christ. We walk in Christ. We breathe in Christ. We do all of these things in Christ. Many people don't believe that Christ died for us yesterday and lives for us today. Jesus Christ the same yesterday, the same today, and for ever. He died for me yesterday and He lives for me today. Tomorrow He is coming back in the clouds of glory.

"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope" (I Thes. 4:13).

Those that die outside of Jesus Christ have no hope. If you have loved ones who died outside of Jesus Christ you have no hope of ever seeing them again because they died outside of Jesus Christ. Our blessed hope is the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ. "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead

in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words" (I Thes. 4:15-18).

Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today, and forever. Jesus Christ is coming back, so anticipate the wonderful blessed event that Christ is coming back. "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:" (Phil. 3:20).

We look for our Saviour the one that died for us on the cross of Calvary. The one that hung, suffered, bled, and died that we might have life. "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself" (Phil. 3:21).

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory" (Col. 3:1-4). Jesus Christ is our life. He is our very heart-beat and the contentment of our heart and soul. Jesus Christ is our hope of glory. Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today, and forever.

SOME THINGS

(Continued from Page 1)

world and begins dying immediately. Man works all of his life acquiring a great number of things only to lose them at death. If proper provisions are not properly made, his family may even lose all of that! But God did not make man and then just dump him on this earth and forget His creation; in fact, the Bible tells us that God created man as an eternal being, that being, man, will live forever somewhere. But the question is, where?

Because our God created us as such, there is so much more to life than most people realize. Man is going to live forever! He is not like the animal that comes along and then, is gone forever. He has an eternal soul; a soul that will always exist: either with God in heaven or in hell with the Devil. Nevertheless, the Bible tells us, he will live forever.

That is Why Certain Things Are Precious To The Child of God.

I. God's Thoughts are Precious to the Child of God. "How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them," (Psa. 139:17). Oh beloved, that is why the child of God takes the time to read the Word of God on a daily basis. The Christian should want to be found being obedient to God's directions: the Bible gives to us all

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The Baptist Examiner Forum I

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT
THE BAPTIST EXAMINER--P.O. BOX 60--ASHLAND, KENTUCKY 41105-0060

Did Jonah die in the belly of the great whale?

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Jonah 2:1,2: "Then Jonah prayed unto the LORD his God out of the fish's belly, And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice."

This is another difficult question to answer. Isn't the Bible a great Book. Is not God's Word deep? This is a question in which I am sure that no matter which way I answer it, there will be those who disagree with me. I want you to know that to me this is not a question of great importance. This is a question of interest, but certainly not something to bring about divisions among God's people. I do have an opinion on this and will get around to it. I will not be angry with anyone who disagrees with me on this question.

Did Jonah die in the belly of the great fish? No, I do not believe that Jonah died in the belly of the great fish. Let me first deal with the arguments in favor of him dying in the fish's belly.

The strongest argument for Jonah dying is found in verse two. The key phrase there is; "out of the belly of hell I cried..." The word there for hell is "sheol". Sheol has reference to the place of the departed dead. This interpreted literally perhaps would teach that Jonah died in the fish's belly I think the context of this statement will show that Jonah speaks poetically in this instance. I think Jonah was equating the fish's belly with sheol because he saw no way of escape. Jonah was thinking that this was going to be his death. David makes a similar statement in Psalms 139:8. "I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there." The word here is also sheol. We know that David did not make his bed in sheol; he speaks somewhat poetically. I feel that the fact that Jonah cried to God proves he did not die. There is no recording of prayers from sheol. If Jonah died and went to sheol, did he not attain immediate perfection? If he attained perfection, then why would he cry unto God? The fact that Jonah cried from the fish's belly, proves to me that he did not die, but was kept alive by God in the fish's belly. When Lazarus died and was brought back to life, he did not cry unto God, for he was dead. I cannot imagine a prayer coming from sheol. If you can, so be it.

Many argue that Jonah died because he was a type of Christ. I was think a closer look at what he was a type of; will further prove that Jonah did not die. Let us read Matthew 12:40: "For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." There is nothing mentioned here about Jonah dying and Jesus following in that type. The only mention here is that as Jonah was in the whale's belly for three days and three nights; Christ would be in the heart of the earth the same amount of time.

Let us notice the words used by Christ in this verse. He does not say that as Jonah was in sheol. He does not say as Jonah was dead. He says as Jonah was in the whale's belly. We don't refer to departed loved ones as in the grave. We refer to them as in either heaven or hell. I have a brother buried in Appalachia, Va. I don't refer to him as being in the grave for the past thirty one years but that he has been in heaven these past thirty one years. I believe that when Jesus says Jonah was in the whale's belly it teaches that he was alive in the whale's belly. The point of emphasis by Christ is three days and three nights. I also mention that if Jonah died, then, when was he made alive. We find in other Bible cases when the dead are made alive, there is a recording of such in specific details. We have no such recording with Jonah. I believe that if God can create a fish large enough to swallow Jonah. He can keep Jonah alive in that fish's belly for three days and nights.

Did Jonah die in the belly of the great fish? No, I do not believe he did. I believe there are too many unanswered questions to assume death here. I do not believe that men pray to God from sheol. May God bless you all.

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"Then Jonah prayed unto the LORD his God out of the fish's belly, And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice" (Jonah 2:1)

I do not believe that Jonah died in the belly of the great fish, or sea creature, during his 3 days, and 3 nights stay there. I believe that the fish was his preserver, rather than his executor. God had prepared (appointed, ordered) the great fish to swallow Jonah up and preserve him from the watery horror he had been experiencing. Jonah 2:3 tells us, "For thou

hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me." God was the One who had Jonah cast into the sea, not the sailors of their own desire, according to the first part of verse 3. Jonah then describes in verses 3-6, the terrors of his time in the sea, for apparently the fish did not instantly swallow him, but he went to the very bottom while experiencing the horror of the water closing in about him, the force pulling him down, the light receding above him, the sea weeds tangling about him, and the feeling and fear of enclosure, restraint, and death. I once experienced that feeling myself with the exception that it was in a fresh water lake. I believe I can better understand what Jonah felt as he sunk beneath the water because of my own experience. Arriving at the bottom, the foundation, when death seemed sure, Jonah tells us in verse 6 that God delivered him, his life from corruption (literally, the "pit"). He, as God's child, remembered and cried unto the LORD even in that place and situation. That should remind us that we can speak to God anywhere for He is everywhere at any time. The fish swallowed Jonah and preserved him as he contemplated his situation, sin, and what had taken place. That period of contemplation reflected a change in chastened Jonah. In verse 9 he offered a sacrifice of praise to the only true God Who had effected this great provision. Also he vowed to obey the Lord. Just as the pig pen had brought the prodigal son to his senses to return to his father, so the period in the fish's belly brought Jonah to realize that the Lord was his God, the Author and Provider of salvation. There are many types and lessons in this account, but we do not stop to expound them because of space. Jonah says at the end of verse 9, "Salvation is of the LORD." Psalm 68: 19,20 says, "Blessed be the LORD, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation. He that is our God is the God of salvation; and unto God the Lord belong the issues from death." Salvation not only comes from the Lord, but salvation belongs to Him. All praise, honor, and glory to Him who has saved us and does preserve us even in the throes of death for His good purpose.

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"So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased from her raging. Now the

LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights" (Jonah 1:15, 17).

While Jonah was in the fish's belly he prayed as recorded in Chapter 2:1-9. The fact that he "prayed unto the LORD his God out of the fish's belly" would prove that he was very much alive. Physical death is the separation of body and soul. In Jonah 2:7 he said, "When my soul fainted within me I remembered the LORD: and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple." This shows that his soul was with the body in the fish, therefore, not dead but alive.

When he said, "out of the belly of hell cried I," death seemed so certain that it was as if the fish's belly at the bottom of the sea was as a grave, yet the fact that he prayed even though it seemed he was as good as dead, "thou hearest my voice." In order to prefigure the burial of our Lord Jesus Christ, For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." (Matt. 12:40). God kept Jonah in the fish's belly alive three days and three nights. While keeping him alive, He also taught him that he could not run from God. The fact that he spent three days and three nights in the belly of the fish does not mean that he died while there. God kept him alive throughout the ordeal. Neither does the fact that his ordeal prefigured the burial of Christ. Christ was dead before He was placed in the tomb. Jonah was very much alive when he was thrown overboard by the sailors. In fact it was his request that he was thrown overboard, in order to stop the storm.

Yes, Jonah was preserved alive by God while in the fish. Not only was he alive, but he was very much alert concerning his position. Realizing his danger he prayed to God, promising that he would, "sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that I have vowed. Salvation is of the LORD" (2:9). There is no doubt in my mind but that he was alive throughout the whole ordeal, that God kept him alive in order to teach him that which he needed to learn, also using him as a prefigure to the burial of Christ.

SOME THINGS

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the directions that we will ever need. Thus, God's Word tells us all that we need to know about Almighty God, man, sin, redemption, heaven, hell and much more. When the Holy Spirit of God draws a man or a woman to a saving knowledge, He creates within that soul a thirst for righteousness. The one that has been saved by the matchless grace of God will enjoy looking into the things of God. The Word will become very precious to him. The Christian will want to look into the Word of God and find out what God has in store for him. But that is not the case of the unsaved! They have no interest whatsoever in the things of God. Our concern, however, is not so much with the

unsaved today, but with the true child of God. He will love God's Word and will look forward to getting into it on a daily basis.

II. God's Corner Stone is very Precious to the Child of God. "Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste," (Isa. 28:16). "To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious," (1 Pet. 2:4). Again, beloved, that cornerstone is none other than our Lord Jesus Christ. It was because of His finished work on the cross of Calvary that we are redeemed. It is therefore, His present work of intercession that keeps us going. Furthermore, it is His plan to change our vile bodies into incorruptible ones at His coming. Without this cornerstone we would have nothing and would be lost and on our way to hell. Therefore, God's Cornerstone is indeed, very precious to the child of God. But not just because of our salvation; though, that in itself would be more than sufficient. But Jesus Christ is the Cornerstone of the church. The church of God is built upon this very foundation. Therefore, the child of God should love and respect God's church because He is its very foundation. How tragic it is today that many do not love the Lord's church and get involved. He died for His church! He loves it more than words can tell.

III. The Blood of Jesus Christ is Precious to the Child of God. "But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot," 1 Pet. 1:19. We have talked much about this in days gone by, but to the child of God, it is still very precious. God's way from before the foundation of the world was predetermined. No second chance - it was well planned out before the creation of this world. There is no other way for man to have a proper relationship with God apart from the blood that our Lord shed in our case. Several weeks ago when we preached on this particular subject, a so-called "Baptist" preacher made the comment to this preacher, "pastor, if you preached like that all the time, I would not come to your church." I made no apology for believing in the blood of Jesus Christ, rather, defended it to length. "Without shedding of blood is no remission," Hebrews 9:22b. "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood," Rev. 1:5. If you remember your Bible, it was Cain, in Genesis 4, that wanted to worship God without a blood sacrifice and God would not have respect unto him. He will not have respect unto any who attempt to come to God any other way than the God ordained way. Religion is man seeking God!

Religion has never saved one lost soul, and, beloved, it never will. IV. Faith is the instrument that God gives to the child of God at the point of salvation. "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained us like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour" (Continued on Page 5, Col. 3)

The Baptist Examiner Forum II

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT
THE BAPTIST EXAMINER--P.O. BOX 60--ASHLAND, KENTUCKY 41105-0060

Has it ever been right for a man to have more than one wife at one time? Explain as to Old Testament men who did.

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"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Gen. 2:24). When God determined that he would make a wife for Adam he called her an help meet. The words wife and an help meet are used in a singular sense. "An" means "one" and of course, "wife," being singular means "one" also. Using the pattern that God established in the book of Genesis, it should be evident that His plan intended that man have only one wife. God intended that man would be a monogamous being relative to marriage. This plan established by God does not take any provision for polygamy or for the putting away of a wife. We see polygamy and divorce entering the picture later.

Polygamy is witnessed in the cases of Abraham, Jacob, the Judges, David, Solomon, etc. The act of polygamy began in the time of Lamech. "And Lamech took unto him two wives: the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah" (Gen. 4:19). In polygamy, there is no limit as to the number of wives allowed. Lamech had two wives, and the others had varying numbers of wives. Polygamy is not considered too often in our society today, but the Bible deals with the idea in plainness. It caused many problems, and in the case of David, murder. Abraham started out to be polygamous when Sarah presented him with a concubine, but later drove her away. Jacob's life seems to be totally polygamous as his sons were born to different women. In contrast, Noah, Isaac, and Joseph had only one wife.

Divorce was introduced by Moses, and when it was introduced, it seems to show that only one wife was involved. "When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favor in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorce, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house. And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife" (Deu. 24:1-2). The uncleanness referred to in this passage is later explained to be fornication. Note that after there has been a writing of divorce, that there can be another marriage; but it must be in

proper order; divorce and then remarriage.

When we follow the progression of marriage through history, we can see that God's way is the right way. Deviations by man, for whatever reasons he may have, will not stand the test of time. In the beginning, God's plan, through Adam, was that one man have one wife, and man changing it does not make it right.

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When God created Adam He created a woman for him. We read of this in Genesis 2:21-25. When the Pharisees came to Jesus, tempting Him concerning divorce, they asked Him this question, "...is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?" And Jesus gave this answer, "And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female" (Matthew 19:4).

In marriage the man and the woman become one flesh. It seems to me that it would be hard for two women and one man to become one flesh. Would there not be a division in some way? How could two women and one man become one flesh?

In divorce there is division. Divorce for just any cause is against the revealed will of God.

Let us take a closer look at Genesis 2:21-25. When God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam He took one of his ribs. If it was the revealed will of God for me to have more than one wife at a time, why didn't God take two or more ribs from the side of Adam? Notice the statement in the Scripture, "...Male and female created he them" (Genesis 1:27). God made one woman from the rib He had taken from Adam and closed up the flesh instead thereof, and He brought her unto the man.

When men began to take unto themselves more than one wife at a time, I believe they did so without any directions from the Lord. Men did the same thing in taking more than one wife as they did in putting away wives, because of the hardness of the heart. Moses suffered the writing of divorce, even so God suffered men to have more than one wife at a time.

When God gave the instruction to replenish the earth, there was no instruction that man needed more than one wife. Read Genesis 1:28, "And God blessed

them and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth and subdue it..." It is not because of any ordinance from God that men have more than one wife. It is out of pure selfishness and the desire for sinful pleasure, that men take unto themselves more than one wife at a time.

Some one may ask the question, "Why did God so bless Isaac, Jacob, and others as David and Solomon, with their many wives and concubines?" Let me say again, that God allowed this to be so even as He suffered the writing of a divorce for any cause.

God in His great wisdom knows how to accomplish His purpose. He sometimes uses the sinful acts of wicked men to accomplish His purpose. When God's own beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, was crucified; wicked men carried out the purpose of God. We have only to read Acts 2:23, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:" God determined before for this to be done. Read God's holy Word again, (Acts 4:27-28). "For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."

Men rule but God overrules. Let no man say that it is all right or was all right in those days that are gone by for men to have more than one wife at a time, and use this as an excuse to carry out their sinful desire.

SOME THINGS

(Continued from Page 4)

Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 1:1). Man cannot save himself. "Not of works, lest any man should boast," Eph. 2:9. Salvation comes from God Almighty. "Salvation is of the Lord, Jonah 2:9. That salvation is given to us by the Father. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out... And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." (John 6:37, 39). That wonderful salvation is realized by the believer, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye

may believe on the name of the Son of God," (1 John 5:13). Thus, for the one that knows our God, works becomes the evidence to everyone around that God has done business with us. There is no such thing as faith without works! Works do not and have never saved anyone, but our works are the only tool that man can see that God has made a change in us by His blessed Holy Spirit.

V. The Promises of God are precious to the child of God. "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust," (II Pet. 1:4). It is hereby that the believer knows what God has in store for him. There are many promises in the Word of God; some pertain to the nation of Israel, others to the Gentiles, but many there are that have to do with the child of God. Some would have us to believe that we cannot claim the promises of God. But we most certainly can! There are many promises that we can claim. Don't let some theologian take away from you the precious promises of God's Word. We should thank the Lord for His promises and go to the Bank of Heaven and claim them as ours. What promises can we claim? There are so many, that if we begin talking about them here and now, we will run out of time and space. Thus, just a few: our security, our inheritance, our position in Christ, our redemption, our election, our calling, our justification, our glorification, our sanctification, our acceptance and His promise to return and take us home to heaven.

VI. The Death of a child of God is precious in His sight. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints," (Psa. 116:15). Whether we want to admit it or not, the Bible teaches that man must stand before God someday and give an account of his life. To the child of God the death of a loved one or themselves, ought not be a great bother. We are strangers and pilgrims in this old world. Death simply means to the Christian, home. Thus, to be absent from this body of clay means to be present with the Lord. That is simple Bible! How glorious that is! Just as God looks forward to our union with Him, so should the child of God. You might want to call it a graduation. For indeed, it really is. What a day that is going to be for every child of God. But that is not the case with the unsaved. In fact, that is going to be an awful day for the lost. They have no hope! No assurance! No guarantee! They are without God and thus, on their way to a one way collision with hell and all its host. Beloved, that is not a pretty picture, but it is true, nonetheless. The child of God can look forward to that day. This preacher is still a young 46, and yet that day is forty-six years closer than it was when I was born. The Lord may come and deliver us before that day. Nevertheless, if He does not, everyone of us are going to taste of death. We should not fear it. The Christian knows his standing and though he is not going to do something stupid, like help it along, he is not afraid to face death. Are you my friend, afraid of death? If you know the

Lord you should not be afraid. It is, however, a fearful thing to fall into the hands of God unprepared. That is why the death of a child of God is precious in the sight of the Lord, because they are prepared. The Old Testament Saints were not afraid of death. Job said, "I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth." (Job. 19:25). He could face both life and death because of that one fact of life. So can you and I.

JEHOVAH'S

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Our Lord has great zeal. In John 2:15-16 we see Him cleansing the temple. And in verse 17 "His disciples remembered that it is written (Psa. 69:9). The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up". In Titus 2:14 we find that the Lord's people should be "zealous of good works" And in Revelations 3:19 our Lord tells His people to "be zealous therefore, and repent." So we see our Lord even commands His people to have zeal. And who can deny that the Jehovah's Witnesses have zeal, and plenty of it?

But before we can praise these people for their great zeal we need to examine their zeal to see just what it is based upon. In Acts 22:3 Paul tells the Jews that he "was zealous toward God." But if you notice the context of this Scripture you will find that he is talking about the time before he was saved on the road to Damascus. Even in his lost condition he was zealous toward God, but at the same time he actually hated the Lord Jesus Christ. So his zeal for God was of no avail to him so long as he hated God's Son. In Rom. 10:2 Paul speaking concerning the Jews says, "I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge." So in order for our zeal for God to be worth anything to us it must be according to the knowledge of God's precious Word. Therefore, we conclude that though the Jehovah's Witnesses have this great zeal, still if they deny God's precious Son they are just as lost as Paul was that day when he started on his way to Damascus.

So, in all fairness to these people, and to those to whom they witness, let us see who they are, and what they believe. No religious group should object to having someone look into their past, nor into what they believe. We find that the Jehovah's Witnesses were incorporated by "Pastor" Charles Taze Russell in 1884. My father and mother were both teenagers when the Jehovah's Witnesses were hatched out. And since our Lord organized His church while He was here on the earth this group was more than 1850 years too late arriving on the scene for them to be His church.

We should always be much concerned about the kind of person who is the head of the religious group with which we are associated. We certainly should want to know that this person was truthful, that his word could

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JEHOVAH'S

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be relied upon. Was the founder of the Jehovah's Witnesses that kind of man? Was he truthful? Could his word be relied upon? On one occasion when Mr. Russell was in court under oath, he was asked, "Do you know the Greek language?" He answered, "Oh yes." But when the lawyer handed him a Greek New Testament, it was found that he did not even know the Greek alphabet. He was again asked if he could read the Greek language. This time he said "No", but he showed no sign of being ashamed that he had said he did know the Greek language. So I ask you, was the founder of the Jehovah's Witnesses a truthful man, or was he a liar? This man has been dead now for sixty years, and he has long since learned whether there is a burning hell or not.

"Pastor" Russell was succeeded by Judge Joseph F. Rutherford in 1916, and Rutherford was succeeded by Nathan H. Knorr in 1942. These people have taught through the years that all governments, and all churches are dominated by old Satan. I heard one of their workers say several years ago that all preachers were nothing but humbugs. I asked one of them to tell me just how a person is saved. He said without the slightest hesitation that a person is saved by his works! Poor old Paul did not know that, because in Eph. 2:8-9, he said, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works lest any man should boast." And in Titus 3:5 he said, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us." Either this Jehovah's Witness, or Paul lied about this matter of how a person is saved, and I do not believe Paul is the guilty party.

These people are widely known for their doctrine of no burning hell. I asked another one of their workers, who had jumped me for an argument just how a person is saved. He hemmed and hawed for awhile and then, to change the subject, he said there is no such thing as a burning hell. I asked him to turn to Luke 16 and read verses 19-24. He read a verse or two, stopped and said, This is a parable. I said, No it is not a parable. Jesus said, "There was a certain rich man." I then insisted that he finish reading those verses. When he read in verse 24 "for I am tormented in this flame" he said, "That's a lie, and anybody who reads it knows it is a lie." I said to him, "I'm through with you, but when you get in there with that rich man you will remember that statement". In Rev. 19:20 we see two men who are called the beast and the false prophet being cast into that awful lake of fire alive. Then in Rev. 20:10 we see that a thousand years later old Satan is cast into this lake of fire where the beast and the false prophet are. They have been there for a thousand years, and there they are still burning.

Most everyone knows these people deny a burning hell, but very few people seem to know they deny that Jesus Christ is the ever living Son of God. In their

"Bible Studies," vol. 5, page 454 they say, "The man Jesus is dead --- dead forever --- Jesus should never live again but should remain dead to all eternity." Then again they say, "it was necessary not only that the man Christ Jesus should die but just as necessary that the man Christ Jesus should never live again." They go on to say, "As a man, our Lord did not and could not appear and disappear --- He had been changed into a spirit --- we know nothing of what became of it (His body) --- whether it was dissolved into gasses --- no one knows."

In Jno. 20:27 Jesus said to Thomas, "reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side." Pray tell me, how could anyone thrust his hand into the side of a spirit? In Luke 24:39 our dear Lord said, "a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have." Our precious Lord said He had flesh and bones, and He also said that a spirit does not have flesh and bones. So when the Jehovah's Witnesses say that He had been changed into a spirit, somebody lied, and it was not my Lord. In Acts 1:9 we are told that while the disciples beheld our Lord He was taken up from them. How do you behold a spirit?

If you can believe what Jehovah's Witnesses teach, you should join up with them. You sure would make a mighty poor Baptist.

THEORY

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the Giver of all life, but what is meant by the term "life?" Does the question refer to physical life? spiritual life? or eternal life?

Physical life used to be referred to by philosophers as "animal life." It is certainly God who gives life to the flesh both of the godly and of the ungodly.

Spiritual life refers to the communion of man with God. So, the day Adam and Eve sinned, they died as God had said (Gen. 2:16,17).

Of the resurrection: Eternal life is life that everlasts, and it is reposed in the person of Jesus Christ. Therefore, as John wrote, "He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath no life" (1 John 5:12). Eternal life involves the resurrection of the physical body along with its flesh and bones, and it involves spiritual life, that is, unending communion with God.

Scripture is very precise. It says, "...there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust" (Acts 24:15). If as some affirm this "resurrection" should be understood of salvation, the "just" would not need it since no man can be just unless he is converted. Therefore the resurrection spoken of here of necessity speaks of the resurrection of the body. And, in order to make it clear that the resurrection of sinners is different from the resurrection of the saints, the Bible expressly reads that there is a resurrection "of the just and unjust."

Its connection with Adventism: Although Scripture affirms that for the believer to be absent from the body he is present with the Lord (II Cor. 5:8) some within the household of faith have embraced the notion of "soul sleep," a position held by the Adventists beginning in the 19th century.

In the 1840's William Miller, a Seventh-Day Baptist, set two

dates for the Lord to return to earth. People sold their businesses, liquidated their assets and waited in vain for the Lord's appearing.

When the Lord Jesus Christ did not appear, many of Miller's followers became disillusioned. Some banded together to establish the Advent Christian Church, the more evangelical of the off-shoots. Others followed the teaching of Ellen G. White and founded the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, and from out of them came the Jehovah's Witnesses. However, much to our sorrow, the doctrine of soul sleep has in recent years infected some Calvinistic Baptists.

Its association with annihilationism: People who espouse this error nearly always embrace the annihilation theory of hell. It is an error that springs from a weak view of the nature of God and hence a soft understanding of the nature of sin.

"But is there life apart from Christ?" Yes, do not sinners experience physical life although they are "dead in trespasses and sins?" God is the giver of life to all--to men as well as to nations.

Now, if the question is asked, "Is there spiritual life apart from Christ?" the answer is "No!" The only access we have into communion with God is through the Son of God. Therefore, Paul spoke of them who lived in pleasure saying they are "dead while they live" (1 Tim. 5:6).

The Biblical meaning of "life:" "Is there eternal life apart from Christ?" In order to correctly answer, it is necessary to understand what is Biblically meant by the word "life." The Bible teaches that a person is "dead" who is unfulfilled, unsatisfied, unhappy and otherwise in sin. Although they walk among us, such people are "dead while they live," "dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1).

The answer to the question, "Is there life apart from Christ?" is therefore "No!" but as there is a distinction made between the resurrection of the just and of the unjust, so there must be a distinction made between "existence" or "being," and "life." There is no joy or rest outside of Christ.

The essence of punishment: Scripture teaches that God "...will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the death" (Acts 17:31). So Jesus tells us that the unjust "shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Matt. 25:46).

Note first the word "punishment" is used. One has to be conscious if he is to be punished. And note in the second place that the punishment God brings to bear upon the wicked is everlasting. Calvin succinctly remarks that the word "everlasting" means "to ever last," or, he says, "it is not everlasting."

Now consider the text--"...in death there is no remembrance of thee" (Psa. 6:5). Reader, when I seek godly counsel, I go to the shelves of my library to consult with godly ministers. Solomon wrote, "...in the multitude of counselors there is safety" (Prov. 11:14). Commentators on Scripture were wise enough to

put their understanding into print, so that although they are dead yet they speak.

Truth is not a recent arrival on the scene of history. Scripture is to be understood according to the manner in which the saints of God have historically understood it. So Spurgeon explained this verse saying, "Church yards are silent places; the vaults of the sepulchre echo not with songs. Damp earth covers dumb mouths. 'O Lord!' saith he, 'if Thou wilt spare me I will praise Thee.'"

In 1659, Henry Drummond explained the text in virtually the same manner. "Spare me and then I may live to praise and magnify Thy mercy and grace."

John Gill understood it the same way. "The dead cannot praise the Lord among men, only the living." Then he added, "It does not follow from hence that the soul either dies or sleeps with the body, and is inactive until the resurrection-morn, neither of which is true, but the sense is that when a saint is dead he can no more serve and glorify God on earth among men."

Death is natural, even as sleep. In death we take the image of sleep. So the Psalmist says the dead "are as a sleep" (Psa. 90:5). Note the verse does not say the dead are asleep, but rather they are "as a sleep."

Charles Spurgeon, Matthew Henry and John Gill apply the verse as a "comparison of mortal life to sleep." "Time passes unobserved by us as it does with men asleep." Yet after explaining that "In a sound sleep time is insensibly gone," Gill adds, "And men when dead are asleep, not in their souls, but in their bodies." Consider the words of Solomon, "...the dead know not anything" (Eccl. 9:5). As in Luke 16, the rich man once dead was unable to communicate with his brothers yet living, so the dead know nothing about the affairs of this world.

Matthew Henry observed, "It does not appear that they know anything of what is done by those they leave behind. Abraham is ignorant of us. The dead have no further knowledge of anything here on earth."

An argument against the invocation of the saints: Charles Bridges points out, "This Bishop Hall produces as an argument against invocation of saints the ground of which is their notice of our earthly condition and special devotions" (Old Religion, Chapter 10, Section 2).

Job describes death as "A land of darkness, as darkness itself...without any order, and where the light is as darkness" (Job 10:22). "This," says Gill, "is not to be understood of the things of the other world; for the righteous dead know much; their knowledge is greatly increased; they know as they are known...They know not anything that is done in this world, nor how it fares with their children and friends they have left behind them."

Some people believe that when a godly person dies, he sleeps until the resurrection morning. This, however, is not consistent with the teaching of Scripture.

BOOK REVIEWS

We have three new books, (one of them might be called a booklet,) in our book store. They are published by the Bogard Press

which usually, if not always, means they are sound and strong as to Church Truth in the main. As to the Doctrines of Grace, I would probably check each one closely before evaluating them.

One is a booklet, "The Reformation and Baptist Compromise." This is a good and well written book by a man who is very able in this field. It deals well with the matter of the church being local and visible. It shows how many so called Baptists have accepted the Protestant theory of a Universal Invisible Church. The book deals well with this subject. I would recommend it to all who are "Landmark" as to this subject of the nature of the church. It is a small 37 page booklet and sells for \$1.50. Order from our bookstore where the profit stays in the book ministry of our church.

We have "Outline Studies in I,II,III John and Jude" by Ray O. Brooks. I have never been overly fond of only outline studies of Bible Books, though some of them can be helpful. These studies are expository and homiletical. I would say they will help the student of these books, and will even more help the preacher who may desire to preach a series of sermons on either of these books. I would say it would make a worthwhile addition to one's library. It is a paperback book of a little over 100 pages. It sells for \$3.95 which is a good price in today's book market. Order from our book store.

We have "The First Things in Genesis" by O.H. Griffith. Every Bible student knows that Genesis is a book of first things. This book sets forth a brief study of over ninety "first things" in Genesis. It is somewhat helpful as a study book, and one could cull from its suggestions an interesting series of sermons, or even several such series. It is a paperback book of nearly 100 pages, and sells for \$4.95. Order from our book store where the profit stays in the book ministry of our church.

ANGRY

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"The face of the LORD is against them that do evil." (Psa. 34:16). Who can stand in the presence of the Lord when He is angry? Woe unto you when God shall set His face against your wickedness. Where will you go and hide from His face? God will set His face against you sinners. As much as heaven is above the earth, so much more terrible is it to fall into the hands of an angry God than into the paws of bears and lions. God Himself will be your tormentor, and your destruction shall come from His presence. His heart is against you. He hates all workers of iniquity. Can you not tremble in His presence that you are the object of God's hatred? Think of the holiness of God. Is not His holiness against you? God has fixed His habitual displeasure against you. He cannot delight in a sinner out of Christ.

Everything you do is an abomination against God. "For all that do such things, and all that do unrighteously, are an abomination unto the LORD thy God". (Deut. 25:16). All sins

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INTERCOMMUNION: UNSCRIPTURAL AND INCONSISTENT

Part 3, Chapter 4 "The Wine"

by J. R. Graves

1. The fruit of the vine: Christ used and enjoined the use of the fruit of the vine. This proposition all will admit, for it is the very language of Christ. **"But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it:"** (see Matt. 26:27, 29).

It was, then, the fruit of the vine, not of the tree or of corn, and much less of the brier, that Jesus had drank with His disciples, and here commands them to drink. To use the fruit of anything, save of the vine, is to violate the positive command of Christ. It well becomes us, then, to impartially ascertain what this "fruit of the vine" signified.

It will not be denied that throughout the Bible, this phrase is used to denote one definite kind of drink--"the pure blood of the grape" (Deut. 32:14)--wine. The Jews designated it by several words, as *yani*, *tiros*, *asis*, *chamer*, but all meaning the same thing--the expressed juice of the grape. This leads to another question: Was this "fruit of the vine" the fermented or unfermented juice of the grape--unleavened or leavened?

This is only asking whether it was real wine at all, or something else. I do not understand that there ever was, or can be, a drop of real wine made without fermentation. The technical name of the mass of crushed grapes, or juice, before fermentation, is "must." If it is ever called wine before fermentation, which is the process by which all leaven is purged out, it is by anticipation; as it is said of the cook, "she has just put her bread into the oven to bake." The cook never bakes bread, but the dough to make it bread. The dough is sometimes called bread by anticipation.

It will be conceded by all that the wine Jesus used at the passover was identical with what the Jews were, in that age, wont to use in its observance, whatever they may use now.

It has been absurdly argued that fermented wine could not have been used at the passover, because leaven was expressly forbidden. For this very reason fermented wine should be used. That which causes fermentation in wine is comparable to leaven--foreign to the nature of wine; and fermentation is but the latent energy of nature to throw this matter off, or settle it to the bottom of the vessel, so as to leave the wine pure and clear, and fited to drink. Before this clarifying process takes place, it is unfit to drink, and will produce powerful cathartic effects. The corn and wine of Palestine were valuable products of trade and commerce, but unfermented wine was not known in their consumption or commerce.

(1) *Yayin* is the usual term for their wine. It is used one hundred and thirty-six times in the Hebrew of the Old Testament. That it was fermented, and, therefore, if used to excess, intoxicating, read in Genesis 9:21-24; Proverbs 20:1 and Psalm 104:15. In itself, rightly used, it was valuable; but abused, a curse. (2) *Tiros*, new

wine, or wine of the first year, unmellowed by age, and heady.

In Hosea 4:11, we are told that **"Whoredom and wine and new wine take away the heart."** Not if *tiros* was inspirited and unpalatable "must." Improperly used, *tiros* can excite men to evil.

(3) As is used in four places, and capable of intoxicating (see Isa. 49:26). (4) *Chamer* was the fermented juice of the grape (Deut. 32:14; Isa. 27:2). In both



cases spoken of as a valuable product of the soil. One of the distinguished blessings God promised to His obedient people (Prov. 3:10).

The Holy Spirit selected but one Greek word to indicate the wine Christ was charged with drinking, which He made at Cana, which the Jews used at their passover, which Paul instructed the churches he organized to use at the Lord's Supper, and Timothy to drink medicinally. That word is *oinos*. It is used twenty-seven times in the New Testament to indicate the fermented juice of the grape, twice as wine drinker, and five times figuratively. There is not the slightest ground for the most captious to question the well-established fact that *oinos* means the fermented juice of the grapes. Think of the Jews charging Christ with being a bibber of something wholly unintoxicating! And Christ's comparison founded upon men putting new grape jelly or preserves of grapes into old skins, and they bursting per consequence! Or the members of the church at Corinth getting drunk seriously, this latter case settles the question with all who bow to the authority of inspiration. This church used the kind of wine Paul instructed them to use when he instituted the ordinance.

So much has been said and written of late by fanatical men under the plea of temperance, and yet much against the cause of temperance, to drive the wine from the Lord's Supper which Christ used and commanded us to use till He comes again, that I submit a few authorities conclusive of the question.

The claim is that fermented wine was not used by the Jews, in their passover, in the days of Christ; but the unfermented juice, preserved by boiling, or the water of dried raisins, or preserves of grapes, etc., and, therefore, we may, and should, use such slop; or even molasses and water, or water only, rather than real wine.

Rev. J. W. Willmarth, of Philadelphia, in an exhaustive article in reply to one of these raisin-water advocates, says:

"Evidence in regard to what modern Jews practiced in the passover, is not decisive. It requires much credulity to believe that the ancient passover cup, and the 'cup of blessings,' were filled with 'an infusion of raisins in water,' which Dr. Cunningham says Jews now use. If true wine was the only wine known to the Jews, and to the writers of the Bible, who can doubt that the same is meant in the Mishna, and was used at the passover, and so at the communion?"

I feel justified, therefore, in reaffirming them; and in exhorting my brethren not to mutilate the Lord's ordinance, in accordance with the demands of ultraists, whose exegesis is worthless, and whose projects would annul the commandment of Christ, without doing a particle of good to any human interest."

A. Van Dyck, D.D., for twenty-five years missionary in Syria, and a philologist of great renown, says: "There is not, and, as far as I can find out, there never was, in Syria, anything like what has been called 'unfermented wine.' The thing is not known in the East...They could not keep grape or raisin-water unfermented, if they would. It would become either wine or vinegar in a few days, or go into putrefactive fermentation. The native churches--Evangelical, Maronite, Greek, Coptic and Arminian--all use fermented wine at the communion. They have no other, and have no idea of any other."

The evidence goes to confirm my views of 'Bible wine,' and of the wine of the Lord's Supper. If anyone wishes to examine further, the sources of information are open; the verdict of Christian scholarship is decisive" (Bibliotheca Sacra, Vol. 26, p.170).

If the reader will refer to "Hackett's Smith's Bible Dictionary," under Art. wine, he will find this: "In the condemnatory passages, no exception is made in favor of any other kind of liquid, passing under the same name, but not invested with the same dangerous qualities."

Nor again, in these passages, is there any decisive condemnation of the substance itself, which would enforce the conclusion, that elsewhere an unfermented liquid must be understood. The condemnation must be understood of excessive use in any case; for even when this is not expressed, it is implied; and, therefore, the instances of wine being drunk without any reproof of the act, may, with as great improbability, imply the moderate use of an intoxicating beverage, as the use of an unfermented wine."

The editor of the Congregational Review, No. 54, in reviewing a book of Mr. Thayer's on "Communion Wine and Bible Temperance," published by the National Temperance Society, in which he attempts to show that there are two kinds of wine mentioned in the Bible, one intoxicating and the other not, uses this language: "We have gone over the arguments he has produced; we have considered his so-called evidence, which has so often done duty in its narrow range; we have pondered the discussions of Lee, Nott, Ritchie and Duffield before him; what is more, we have gone over the Greek and Hebrew Scriptures carefully for ourselves; have sifted testimony of travelers who know, and those who did not

know; have corresponded with missionaries and Jewish Rabbis on this subject; and, if there is anything in Biblical literature on which we can speak confidently, we have no doubt that Dr. Lawrie is right, and that Rev. Mr. Thayer is wrong. In these views we are thoroughly supported. If we mistake not, the Biblical scholarship of Andover, Princeton, Newton, Chicago and New Haven, as well as 'Smith's Bible Dictionary,' and 'Kitto's Bible Cyclopaedia,' is with us. One of the most learned and devout scholars of this country recently said to us: 'None but a third-rate scholar adopts the view that the Bible describes two kinds of wine.'"

Gavazzi, the most learned and eloquent Protestant preacher of Italy, says: "I have indulged in the expression 'unfermented wine' for the sake of argument...although, to me, as an Italian, the expression imparts downright nonsense. In fact, wine is only wine by fermentation, and to speak of unfermented wine, is to speak of dry water, of nightly sun, of unelectric lightning" (Belfast Witness).

Such a cloud of witnesses, representing the highest scholarship of America, ought to forever settle this wine question with every Christian man and woman.

2. The unleavened fruit of the vine: The fruit of the vine, purged of all its leaven, cleansed of all impurities by nature's own energy, was used by Christ, instead of blood, to symbolize the great fundamental doctrine of His vicarious sufferings and death for His people--the laying down of His own life. It was none other than the Lord of glory, the Lawmaker Himself, who so pitied and loved us that He gave Himself, and not another, for us; who alone, without the partnership aid of man or angel, endured all the penalty due our sins. It is this great fact we should discern, that it was the Lord's--our Lord's--body, and not the body of a mere human being, that was lacerated and torn, and writhed in pain, every pang of which reached the Divinity that inhabited it: that it was our Lord's blood which the wine symbolized, even the blood of the Everlasting Covenant, every drop of which cost Him a pain; and not the blood of a man, the sufferings of a mortal being, in the slightest conceivable degree, that is symbolized by the wine of the Supper. What had mortal, finite man to do in assisting Christ to pay our penalty, much less to have paid it all! Christ surely had no helper in this infinite transaction. The name He ever wishes to be known to us is the "Lord our Righteousness." He Himself, unassisted and alone, fulfilled all righteousness for us; and it was none other than the blood of our Divine Redeemer that was the purchase price of our redemption. Paul emphasizes this fact in the strongest language possible, when he declares that God purchased His church with His own blood (Acts 22:28), His own sufferings, and the offering up of Himself as a sacrifice for our sins. [Since the fifth century there have been dialecticians who claim that it is impossible for Divinity to suffer, and that the mere human part of Christ alone endured all the suffering while the divine part of the Christ, the Lord of glory, suffered not the slightest inconvenience! If this be so, then the wine symbolizes the

blood of a human being, and not the blood of God, our divine Redeemer, and we find ourselves idolaters! But Christ said: "This is my blood..", it symbolizes my sufferings and death in your own stead.]

3. The one cup: There should be but "one cup" or measure of wine upon the table, not several bottles or measures, and this, after thanks, can be poured into as many glasses or cups as is necessary to distribute it readily. "...The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread" (I Cor. 10:16,17). Such seems to us most probably the translation of this confessedly difficult passage--there should be only one loaf and one vessel of wine, to symbolize the one body" (Religious Herald, September 30, 1880).

While in one aspect it has respect to the oneness of the local body celebrating, in another it symbolizes the one sacrificial offering of Christ for us. We have heretofore seen that whatever it was used to typify--point forward to--the salvation provided through the sacrifice and mediation of Christ, is selected to symbolize--point back to the same saving truths. By referring to the twenty-ninth of Exodus we find the law of the daily sacrifices. One lamb was appointed to be offered for the morning and one for the evening sacrifice continually, and in this way: "And with the one lamb a tenth deal of flour mingled with the fourth part of an hin of beaten oil; and the fourth part of an hin of wine for a drink offering" (Exo. 29:40). This offering was a representative of all the atonement sacrifices, because general in its application and continually offered. It was precisely at the hour when the evening atonement sacrifice was to be offered that Christ on the cross cried out with a loud voice, "It is finished," and yielded up His spirit--offered up Himself. This cry signified that all the types that pointed to the Great Sacrifice for sin once to be offered, were in Him fulfilled; in visible attestation of which--"And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom;...(Matt. 27:51), and the mercy-seat, now sprinkled with the blood of the everlasting covenant, and thus made accessible to sinful man, was thrown open to the approach of a lost race through the mediation of Jesus Christ.

So, in this ordinance, wine instead of blood is employed to symbolize the great saving truth, that a complete satisfaction of the infinite claims of violated law had been made by the blood--the precious blood--of our Divine Redeemer. Christ said of the wine, this is--represents--the new covenant in my blood which was shed for you. The doctrine, the saving truth symbolized, is salvation only through the sufferings and death of Christ. The one cup or measure of wine, therefore, evidently signifies the one suffering Redeemer, not two,

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INTERCOMMUNION

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a God and a man, but one victim, the one offering for sin, not two, the one human and the one divine; and that but once offered for our sins, which forever takes the place of those continual offerings which could not take away sin. Paul explains it thus: "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb. 10:10). Here Paul refers to the daily sacrifices above described: "And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;... For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Heb. 10:11,12,14).

By the light of this teaching we can the better understand Paul's reasoning with the Jewish Christians upon this one offering, once for all offered for each one that comes to God by it has had all its divine efficacy applied to his cleansing and sanctification. If such an one should fall away from this, lose the efficacy of this, he must necessarily be lost forever, since there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin. Christ cannot again suffer and die as his sacrifice, and no other blood is more availing, and this cannot be applied the second time, and, therefore, it must be impossible to renew such an one to repentance, to save one who has exhausted the efficacy of the one and only offering for sin. The reader will see that it is only supposition, doubtless used to emphasize the infinite superiority of the blood of Christ over that of the blood of the bestial sacrifices under the law. Paul leaves his brethren in no doubt as to the value of the blood of Christ, for he declares that, by its application once, "it forever perfected those sanctified by it," so that there was no necessity for Christ to be offered again, or for any other atoning blood to be applied, since the efficacy of the blood of Christ can never be lost. Bless God for this symbol of deepest significance! One cup--one blood. Enough for me--for all, and one application of it! Enough, since it forever perfects, saves, all who receive gracious cleaning!

ANGRY

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are an abomination to God. Therefore all your devotion, service, and sincerity are sin, and sin is an abomination unto God. If God does not enfavor you; if there is no grace found in your heart, everything you do is an abomination unto God.

Yes, God is angry with the sinners. "...Depart from me, ye cursed, unto everlasting fire..." (Matt. 25:41). Oh what a misery is this, to be out of the favour and under the anger of God. If God does not save you, if God does not wash your sins away, you will have no part in Him. You will suffer in both

your soul and body in hell throughout eternity. "God is angry."

Then secondly, what will happen to you when God is angry? What does the Word of God say to you concerning His anger? As you read and ponder the text I use in this message you will see yourself how God becomes your enemy. Do you know what will happen to you?

Your lusts will enslave you. If you are not converted, remember that you are the very servant of sin; it reigns over you and holds you under its dominion. Your conscience will fly away from you when lust burns through you, and then later you will see your destruction. When temptation comes, your lust breaks the cords of all your vows and the promises of your resolutions and carries you to your own destruction.

The law of God threatens you and curses you. Oh how dreadful it is. It is like the thunders and lightnings that terrifies in its flashes, and a fire ready to devour you. Each letter is like a sharp-edged sword that speaks blood and war sounds and death against you.

The Lord's gospel itself speaks its judgment for your eternal damnation. "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John 3:18). If you continue in your sins and your unconverted state, know that the gospel denounces your condemnation. Oh man, how sin destroyed you. Open your eyes now while there's a remedy. Where will you spend eternity? Death is at hand, the Judge is even at the door. "Except ye repent," God is angry with you.

And thirdly, what is the remedy for God's anger? By the authority of God's Word, I say unto you that there is a way to bring you to set your heart upon turning God. What shall I do to be saved? How can I be converted?

Set it down with yourself. In your unconverted state, it is impossible for you to get to heaven. Now consider this and ponder it in your heart. Can anyone save you except Christ? He tells you that you cannot enter into His kingdom unless you repent and be converted. Enquire into your heart and into your life and examine yourself and all your ways.

Strive to affect your heart with a deep sense of your misery. Meditate on the multitude of your sins. Look inside your heart how the power of sin has poisoned your whole being. Meditate on the results of sin. It cries to heaven; it calls for vengeance. Its due wages are death and damnation; it brings the curse of God upon the soul and body. God is angry. Oh what a load of wrath, what a weight of curses, what treasures of vengeance have all the millions of your sins deserved! Men must feel and see the danger of the guilt of sin.

Sins must all be renounced. If you are still enjoying the practice of any sin, you are undone. In vain do you hope for life in Christ except you depart from iniquity. Forsake your sin, and you can find mercy. Your sins must die, or else you will die in your sins. Strive to find out your sins. Enter into your closet and say: "What evil have I lived in? What duty have I neglected to-

ward God? What sin have I lived against my Papa and my Mama? What sin will do to you, why you hesitate to cast it out. Sin will flatter you; it is a poison that kills you, and the justice of the infinite God is angry with you. "Flee from the wrath to come."

And now lastly, What God will do to you. When I preach to you about sin and the wickedness of your heart, God's Word has a way out. If I preach about hell, remember that God has a heaven for the repentant sinner.

"For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us..." (Titus 3:3-5). What grace is this! Your sins which God hates will be covered by the blood of Christ. He became your substitute. Christ's righteousness becomes your righteousness. "...David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin" (Rom. 4:6-8).

My friend, this is our main reason why we come to you just to preach to you. "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men..." (II Cor. 5:11). Do not say that this message is not for you, but for somebody else. No! This message is for you. Do not be content by just thinking you have fled to Christ. Make certain! Beg the Lord to search your heart and show you yourself. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36). May God bless you! Amen.

TITHING

(Continued from Page 1)

place, we found that in the New Testament itself we have both hints and plain teaching that God requires His people to tithe even now, for tithing is not a part of the ceremonial law, it is a part of the moral law. It is not something that has a dispensational limitation, but is something that is binding on God's people in all ages.

Now, let us go a step farther. Tithing is even more obligatory on the saints of the New Testament than it was upon God's people in Old Testament days -- not equally binding, but more binding, and that for two reasons: first, on the principle of "unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required..." (Luke 12:48). The obligations of God's saints today are much greater than the obligations of the saints in Old Testament times, because our privileges and our blessings are greater. As grace is more potent than law, as love is more constraining than fear, as the Holy Spirit is more powerful than the flesh, so our obligations to tithe are greater, for

we have a deeper incentive to do that which is pleasing to God. Listen! The Christian should tithe for the very same reason he keeps all the other commandments of God, and for the same reason he keeps the laws of his country -- not because he must do so, but because he desires to do so. As a law-abiding citizen in the kingdom of God, he desires to maintain the government of God and to do that which is pleasing in His sight.

Again, in proportion as the priesthood of Christ is superior to the priesthood of Aaron, so are our obligations to render tithes to Him. The Aaronic priesthood was recognized and owned by Israel through their payment of the tithe to them. In the 7th chapter of Hebrews the Holy Spirit has argued the superiority of the priesthood of Christ, which is after the order of Melchizedek, on the fact, or on the basis of the fact rather, that Melchizedek himself received tithes from Abraham. That is the very argument the Holy Spirit uses there to establish the superiority of the Melchizedek order of Christ's priesthood. He appeals to the fact as recorded in Gen. 14, that Melchizedek, who was the type of Christ, received tithes from Abraham, and argues from that that inasmuch as Levi was in the loins of Abraham, therefore the Melchizedek priesthood of Christ is greater than that of Aaron because Abraham himself paid tithes to Melchizedek, who is a type of Christ. Therefore, in proportion to the greater blessings and privileges that we enjoy, we are under deeper obligations to God; and in proportion as Christ's priesthood is superior to that of the Levites, so is our obligation the greater to render tithes unto the Lord today, than that under which His people lived in Old Testament times.

Why God Has Appointed Tithing

In the next place we wish to suggest a few reasons why God has appointed tithing. In the first place, as a constant recognition of the Creator's rights. As our Maker, He desires that we should honor Him, and honor Him by giving one-seventh of our time and one-tenth of our income. In other words, the tenth is the recognition of His temporal mercies and the owning that He is the Giver of them. It is the acknowledgement that temporal blessings come from Him and are held in trust for Him.

Tithing An Antidote Against Covetousness

Again, we believe that God has appointed tithing as an antidote against the spirit of covetousness, for by nature we are full of covetousness. That is why in the ten commandments God incorporates "Thou shalt not covet." That is why Christ said to His disciples, "beware of covetousness." And tithing has been appointed by God to deliver us from the spirit of greed, to counteract our innate selfishness; therefore, it has been designed for our blessing for, like all of His commandments, none of them is grievous, but appointed for our good.

Tithing the Solution of Every Financial Problem

Again, I believe that God has appointed tithing as the solution of every financial problem that can arise in connection with His work. While the Children of Israel practiced tithing there was no difficulty in maintaining the system of worship that God had appointed. And if God's people today practised tithing, there would be an

end of all financial straits that are crippling so many Christian enterprises. No church could possibly be embarrassed financially where its members tithed. And I believe that that is the solution of rural church work in thinly populated districts. Yes, and in connection with the mission fields. Wherever you have ten male Christians you have quite sufficient means to support a permanent worker in their midst, for no worker should desire any greater remuneration than the average income of those supporting him. Therefore, if you have ten male Christians giving one-tenth of their income -- no matter what it may be -- it is sufficient to sustain them -- you have sufficient to maintain and sustain a regular worker in their midst. That is God's solution to the missionary problem. Wherever you have ten average male Chinese you have a situation where they ought to be independent and no longer leaning upon the help of God's people at home here. It is a scandal and a shame to see churches in India and in China today that have been in existence fifty years, still looking to God's people in Australia and England and America for their financial support. And why is it? Because the teachings of the Word of God have been neglected. It is because they have never been taught the foundation of Christian finance. No wonder the missionary world is calling out today that they are crippled for lack of funds! They need to be taught scriptural finance. That is why God appointed tithing. It is the solution of all financial problems in connection with His work. Where tithing is practised there will never be any going into debt.

Tithing as a Test of Our Faith

Now then in the fourth place, God has appointed tithing as a test of our faith, and for the nourishing and developing of our faith -- especially of the young Christians. Here is a young man who has just started housekeeping. He professes to trust God with the enormous matter of his eternal future. He professes to have confidently left his immortal interests in the hands of God. Well now, dare he trust God with one-tenth of his income for a year? My friends, tithing develops in young Christians the spirit of trusting the Lord in their temporal affairs.

Two Objections Anticipated

Before coming to the next point let us just anticipate two objections. When the subject of tithing is brought before the Lord's people, there are usually a few who are ready to say, "Well, I think it is a man's duty to provide for his own household, for his own family." Yes, so do I. Scripture says so. There is nothing wrong in that. I go further. I believe it is perfectly proper for a young Christian man to desire and to seek after an increasing income with which to properly support his growing family, but if he is not a tither he has no guarantee from God that his present income will ever be maintained, let alone enlarged. But the tither has that guarantee from God, as we shall yet see, unless our eyes are shut.

And then perhaps, there are some who say, I cannot afford to tithe, for I have made some investments which have turned out very badly. Yes, and you are likely to meet with some worse ones if you continue to rob God! My

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TITHING

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friends, you need Divine guidance in the matter of investing, and God won't give that guidance while you are walking contrary to His revealed will in the matter of church finance. I am fully persuaded that in the vast majority of cases, if not all (this may sound harsh: God's Word is piercing and condemning and rebuking and humbling) that where you have children of God in middle life or in old age, who are in financial straits, it is because they robbed God in their earlier years. Be not deceived: God is not mocked! If they did not handle to His glory and use according to His Word the money He did give them, then they must not be surprised if He withholds from them now: see Jer. 5:25! There is a cause for every effect. There is an explanation to all things right here in the Word of God, too.

"Proving" God

Now let us come at closer grips with the text itself. There are three things I wish you to notice carefully. "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts..." (Mal. 3:10). My friend, that is a startling expression. It is a remarkable expression. God says, "Prove Me." Those words mean this: Place the Almighty on trial (and it would be sin, it would be positively wicked, for any creature to do so unless he was definitely commanded so to do). "Prove Me now herewith" -- with the tithe. In other words, our text tells us to put God to the proof, to test Him out and see what He will do. We are bidden to give Him one-tenth of our income and then to see whether He will let us be the loser or not. "Prove me now herewith." I tell you, my friends, my soul is

overwhelmed by the amazing condescension of the Most High to place Himself in such a position. God allows Himself to be placed on trial by us, and tithing is a process of proof. Tithing is a means whereby we can demonstrate in the material realm the existence of God and the fact of His governorship over all temporal affairs. If you have any shadow of doubt in your mind and heart as to whether or not God exists, or as to whether or not He controls all temporal affairs, you can have that doubt removed by an absolute demonstration of the actuality of God's existence and of His control over temporal affairs. How? By regularly, faithfully, systematically giving Him one-tenth of your gross income, and then seeing whether He will let you be the loser or not: proving whether He does honor those who honor Him: proving whether He will allow Himself to be any man's debtor. He says, "Prove Me, prove Me, put Me to the test." You trembling, fearful saints, never mind if your income is only \$1 a day, and you have to scheme and scratch and strain to make both ends meet. Take one-tenth away and devote it to the Lord, and then see if He will remain your debtor. "Prove me now herewith," He says. Try Me out and see whether I am worthy of your confidence; put Me to the test and see whether I will disappoint your faith. As we said above, God has appointed tithing as a test of faith, for the development of faith; and if the young Christian would only start by proving God in the material realm, testing Him out in His own appointed way, what a confirmation it would be! How it would enable him to trust God in temporal things -- which is one of the hardest things that the average Christian finds to do.

"The Windows of Heaven" Opened

Now, coming again to the text. Notice the expression, "...**prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven...**" What does He mean by that? "And see if I will not open the windows of heaven." What does He mean? Now Scripture always interprets Scripture. If you will go back to the 7th chapter of Genesis, verses 11 and 12, you will find that identical expression used there, and it explains the force of it here in Malachi 3. Read Gen. 7:11: "**In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights.**" Now the same expression that is used in Genesis 7 in connection with the Deluge is used here in Malachi 3 in connection with the return, the response, the blessings that God has promised to those that honor Him with their substance, by devoting a tithe to His service. In other words, that expression "open the windows of heaven" signifies an abundant outpouring. Now listen! That does not mean an abundant spiritual blessing. It does not mean that at all, for spiritual blessings cannot be purchased. You ask, "Can temporal?" In one sense, yes. Certainly they can in the sense that God has promised that we shall reap what we have sown; in the sense that He has promised to honor those who honor Him; in the sense that He has promised a bountiful return to a bountiful giver. Certainly! Just in the same way that He has promised length of days to those who honor their parents when they are children. That is a blessing that is purchased! Now then, listen! When God has promised to open the windows of heaven and pour out a blessing, it is not a spiritual one, it is a temporal one. He promises an increase in your income. Of course He does. Do you suppose Almighty God would be your debtor? Do you suppose the Most High would allow you to be the loser because you are faithful to His Word and obedient to His will and give Him a tenth of your income? Why, of course not. And we say again, the great reason why so many of God's people are poor is because they have been unfaithful with the money that God gave them. They robbed God! No wonder they have suffered adversities and misfortunes. No wonder! Some of us need to re-read our Bibles on the subject of the principles and conditions of temporal prosperity. Some need to learn that the God of the New Testament is the God of the Old Testament and that He changes not. God changes not. God does not vary the principles of His government. The God who gave bountiful crops to a people in the Old Testament times who honored Him and kept His Word, is the same God who is on the throne today, and the same God gives bountiful crops and prosperity in business to them who honor Him. But those who meet with financial adversities and financial misfortunes -- there is a reason for it; of course there is. The world calls it "bad luck"; they know no better, but we ought to!

"Enough and More Than Enough"

It is very obvious the translators

did not know what to do with this text, if you will notice the words they have put in italics. Look at it as it reads (the last part of Mal. 3:10): "I will open the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing, that (now leave out the words in italics) not enough." The words in italics are not in the original. They have been supplied by the translators and they had to supply more words in the last clause than were actually there, which shows they did not know what to do with it. The Hebrew as nearly as I can get it in the original means, "there shall be enough and more than enough." That does not vary very much from the rendering of the translators. In other words, it means, "The liberal soul shall be made fat." Turn for a moment to II Chron. 31:10, "And Azariah the chief priest of the house of Zadok answered him, and said, Since the people began to bring the offerings into the house of the LORD, we have had enough to eat, and have left plenty: for the LORD hath blessed his people; and that which is left is this great store." Now if you read the preceding verses you will find it was when the tithe was restored in that revival in the days of Hezekiah; and here we are told that since the people brought their offerings (their tithes) into the Lord's house there was not only enough, but there was more than enough; there was a great store left over! It is ever thus when we faithfully honor God with our substance! John Bunyan wrote:

There was a man,
Some called him mad;
The more he gave,
The more he had."

Practical Suggestions

In closing I want to give you a few practical suggestions. They are very important and they are very simple. In the matter of tithing, Christian friends, be just as strict, and careful and systematic as you are in business matters, in fact, even more so, for it is not the world's money and it is not your own, but it is the Lord's money which is involved. Now, do not trust to memory. There are some Christians who say, "Well, I have never bothered to keep any records, but I am quite sure that if I had done so, I should find that I had given at least a tenth to the Lord." Some of you might be surprised to find -- if you did keep a record and looked it up -- how much short of the tenth you had given!

In the first place I would suggest this. Form the habit of taking out one-tenth from all the moneys that you receive either as wages or gifts. Subtract one-tenth and put it into a separate bag, or box, or purse. That is what it means when it says in I Cor. 16, "**laying by in store.**" And that box or purse is the Lord's, not yours. It is holy unto Him. Form the habit of taking out a tenth from all you receive, putting it into a separate compartment belonging to the Lord.

In the second place, get a small book, a cheap notebook, and on one page put down all your receipts (it will not take some of you very long -- one entry, I suppose, at the end of the week) and on the other page put down the disbursements of God's "tithe."

And then in the third place make it a matter of definite prayer to God to guide you in the disbursement as to where He would have you use the money that belongs to Him. It is not yours; it is His; for

remember, you have not even begun to give at all until you have first paid your tithe. Giving comes in afterwards. The tithe is the Lord's. That is His. That is not yours to give at all; that belongs to the Creator. You have not begun to give until you have done your tithing.

Editor's Note: These three practical suggestions should be ignored. There is no need even to pray about what to do with the tithe. The tithe is to be given into the Lord's church. Every saved person should be a member of a sovereign grace landmark missionary Baptist church and should put his or her tithes and offerings there. One has no right to decide where to put his tithes. Obey God and put it in one of His true churches.

Elijah - 16

"Go Return To Your Work"

by Joseph M. Wilson

"And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away. And the LORD said unto him, Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest, anoint Hazael to be king over Syria: And Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel: and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abelmeholah shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room" (I Kings 19:14-16).

In our study of Elijah (I Kings 17:1-19:18), we have learned that there was quite a contrast between Elijah standing on Mount Carmel, tall and true, facing four hundred and fifty false prophets, and Elijah fleeing for his life from one woman, Jezebel. We learn from that, that except as we are upheld by the power of God we are weak people and that even Elijah was a man of like passions as we are. "Elias (Elijah) was a man subject to like passions as we are..." (James 5:17). [Note: Elias is the Greek form of Elijah.]

Elijah fled down to Beer-sheba, the southern part of Judah. He left his servant there and went a day's journey into the wilderness, sat down under a juniper tree and requested that he would die. But God, in marvelous mercy and compassion, gave Elijah sleep for his body. An angel touched him to awaken him and had food prepared for him. After he ate the food and drank some water, he laid down again and God gave him further sleep. The angel of the Lord touched him again and told him to "...**Arise and eat...**" (I Kings 19:7). He ate and drank some more water and on the strength of that, he traveled forty days and forty nights

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GOD'S GLORY REVEALED

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (II Cor. 3:18).

As I sit gazing into the blue sky --
With my pen in hand, and vainly try --
To write a verse that would express --
Thoughts of Thee, O God, in Holiness.

I can see Thy Majesty in all creation:
Thy Sovereign dealing to every nation:
Thy power supreme, above human thought:
Thy love, and grace, by man unsought.

I can see Thy goodness in every season,
I know, for all things there's a reason:
All works of nature, obey Thy will --
As when to the waves He said "Be still."

I see God's dealing with fallen man,
I vaguely understand salvation's plan:
Eternal love for all His chosen race
Dying at Calvary to take their place.

Why He loved so, we can never see --
Dying for sinners, like you and me
This great salvation, by Him alone
As, for all our sin, He did atone.

I now see Him through a darkened veil,
When I'm in trouble He does not fail --
To rescue me by His wonderful grace:
Oh! how I'm yearning to see His face.

When He calls me home that glad day --
And the fleshly veil is taken away:
My vague thinking, will be no more,
I can truly praise the One I adore.

by Claude Creech

STUDIES IN ACTS

by Willard Willis

This brings us to ask who it is that constitutes our Lord's church today and thus has the authority to baptize. I again must refer to I Timothy 3:15 and state emphatically that the Lord's church, which has the authority to baptize, is the "pillar and ground of the truth." She is the Lord's "chaste virgin" which also relates to being the "pillar and ground of the truth." This truth must relate to the act of baptism itself and all the other teachings of Scripture. These teachings include such things as total depravity, salvation by grace through faith, eternal security, election, predestination, limited atonement, etc. Scriptural Baptist Churches are the only ones I have knowledge of which hold to these truths. History also shows that the first church was a Baptist Church. The "Trail of Blood" written by Dr. J.M. Carroll leaves no doubt but that our Lord established a Baptist Church. I therefore must conclude that any person who has not been baptized by a Scriptural Baptist Church has not been baptized. **"And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias" (Acts 1:23).**

One would think that much would already have been said of these men since both had such great qualifications. They, in fact, had been baptized by John and had gone in and out among them from the time of their baptism until Jesus was taken up from them. Each man, then, had been well trained. Each had stood the test in that they had not departed from the Master. Each had followed Him day by day and had grasped His every word. Each, therefore, knew exactly who He was. Each, however, had not been on the first team; but they counted it a privilege, in a sense of speaking, to warm the bench. They were ready when duty called their names.

"And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, show whether of these two thou hast chosen, that he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place" (Acts 1:24, 25).

This prayer shows what a close relationship the apostles still had with Jesus of Nazareth. They, of course, believed that He had risen from the dead, or they could not have made such a petition to Him. They knew Him to be bigger than death and their prayer conformed their belief. They knew too, that He was still ready and willing to be by their side when they needed Him. They knew Him to be a very present help in time of trouble.

Let us also be conscious of the fact that He loves us even as He loved them. He, after all, died for us too. We are the sheep of His pasture, too. Let us, then, as was true of them, enter boldly before His throne of grace. May we, as was true of them, ask Him to solve our problems for us too.

The apostles needed one man to replace Judas. They, however, had two men which were qualified, since each had run the required

race. The two men, as far as the apostles were concerned, were of equal stature. They, however, could see only the outside, so they appealed to their Lord who, as our text states, "knew the hearts of all men..."

Many say and do one thing, but their heart says something else. The heart, however, must be right or all our efforts are in vain. Our going to church, our giving, and our worship must come from the heart. Many, I fear, do God's work because they have to and not because they want to. God, however, knows if our heart agrees with our actions. **"And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles" (Acts 1:26).**

The Lord Jesus had built His church of the twelve apostles. Judas had proven that he was not really one of them. There were twelve light bulbs, but one of them didn't burn because it was not connected to God the Spirit as the power source of the body. There, in fact, are many people in churches today who give off no light. They are dead bulbs which were burned out in Adam. They need to be quickened to spiritual life by God the Holy Spirit.

The apostles, after Judas was cast out, determined, through the guidance of God the Spirit, who was to replace him. "The lot fell upon Matthias." This is the last we read of Matthias. His past life, however, showed that he was not a quitter. He had produced excellent fruit, and there is no reason to think that he failed to continue bearing precious fruit for the Master. One can be sure that he worked harder than ever now that he had been elevated to such a high office. Judas, of course, due to what he had proven to be, could not have held a candle to this man who had replaced him.

"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place" (Acts 2:1). The fact that the "Feast of Pentecost" had "fully come" meant that there would be a lot of visitors in Jerusalem to celebrate the feast. Jews would be there from all points of the country -- even foreign Jews would be there to celebrate the harvest celebration.

The Lord Jesus held back sending the Holy Spirit until this day when so many would be gathered there. The gospel being preached to so large a crowd, and empowered by the Spirit, would assure a widespread reception.

"And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:2-4).

Compare Acts 1:2 regarding the apostles He had chosen. Matthew 28:19, 20 was also addressed to this group and to their fruit or churches which would result from their work. There is no question but that the apostles are the principle subject in Acts, Chapter One. Their names are even recorded in Acts 1:13 (note

that they were all Galileans).

The question before us is, "Did the apostles represent all believers or only the Lord's church?" If they represented only the Lord's church, then Matthew 28:19, 20 is only for the Lord's church. If they represented all believers, then anyone, whether a church member or not, could go into all the world and preach the gospel. I am convinced that they represented only the church -- the Lord's body on earth. I am convinced further that the Holy Spirit came only to the apostles.

It is important to note from I Timothy 3:15 that the Lord's church is the "pillar and ground of the truth," or that she is a "chaste virgin." The Spirit, then, came to the "pillar and ground of the truth," or to the Lord's "chaste virgin" -- His future bride.

The Spirit came to the baptized men whom Jesus had chosen. It was upon each of the apostles that the "cloven tongues" sat. It was the apostles whom the Holy Spirit filled. It was the apostles who began to speak in other tongues or languages. These facts become obvious when one reads Acts 2:7 which states: **"And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans?"**

The apostles, even though they had been awaiting the Holy Spirit and probably wondering when and how He would arrive, never expected Him to arrive as He did. The manner in which the Spirit came could leave no doubt as to His arrival. There could be no doubt, due to the sound and the effect, but that the promise had been fulfilled.

If the Holy Spirit had arrived and said, "Well, here I am," they would have doubted as to whether or not He was authentic. There, however, "came a sound from heaven," or a sound that appeared to rush to them from the heavens above; wind never blows down but horizontally. This sound, which was like the sound of a mighty wind, came down upon them so that there was no question as to where it had originated. Actually, there was no wind, but it had the sound of a mighty wind. Wind, of course, even though it can be mighty, is invisible and so is the Spirit.

"And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them" (Acts 2:3). The word "cloven" says to us that it was not one great flame, but fire divided one from another, or in many parts. Each member of the Lord's church had the emblem of the Spirit upon him. Each would have the power of the Spirit and be influenced by the Spirit. There would not be big and small among them.

This is not the first time that God revealed Himself by way of fire. It was so at the burning bush. God also descended on Mount Sinai in the midst of thunder, lightnings and smoke, and fire. The promise from Matthew 3:11 was that they would be baptized with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

That which follows (Acts 2:6) shows clearly that each of the apostles had special abilities, since each had the same Spirit. Each was able to speak in languages which they had never learned. We, in fact, learn from verse four that they were all filled with the Holy Spirit.

Perhaps, at this point, we need to point out that one should be careful not to confuse the baptism of the Spirit with the filling of the Spirit. One, in fact, can be filled with the Spirit and yet not be baptized by the Spirit. One must only refer to Luke 1:15, 67 in order to be assured that there was a filling of the Spirit prior to Pentecost. This fact means that God the Spirit was on this planet before Pentecost. Yet we read in John 7:37-39 that the Spirit was not yet given. This raises the question as to how we are to understand the filling of the Spirit in Luke 1:15, 67. My answer is that the Spirit was not yet given to the Lord's church. He, in other words, had not taken up His permanent residence in the church. Our Lord Jesus was here in person. He was the Comforter. It was not until He went away that the church needed another Comforter. This they received on the Day of Pentecost.

This raises the question as to why the Spirit was needed. He, of course, according to Acts 1:8, was given to give power to the church. He gave the members of the church the power to speak in other languages. He gave them the ability to utter prophecy. He gave them the power relative to visions and dreams. He gave them the power for service to the entire world.

The gospel, prior to Pentecost, was limited to Israel and Palestine. It, however, was preached to seventeen nationalities on the day of Pentecost. Here then, at Pentecost, was Spirit baptism. There is only one other place where Spirit baptism was administered. Such was at Caesarea as recorded in Acts 10:44-46 and 11:15-16. The Baptism of the Spirit at Pentecost was for the Jews while it was for the Gentiles in Acts 10:44-46.

Those who claim to practice Spirit baptism today lay their hands on the recipient and pray over him or her. They sometimes agonize with them until the Spirit, according to them, finally falls upon them. Spirit baptism, however, in the New Testament was administered only by the Lord Jesus. He used no one to lay their hands on anyone or pray or agonize with anyone. It all happened "suddenly."

We know from Ephesians 4:5 that there is only one baptism today, and this baptism is in water. The baptism spoken of in I Corinthians 12:13 is water baptism. Paul, in fact, states, **"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body."** The one body Paul referred to, according to I Corinthians 12:27, was the Lord's body at Corinth. Furthermore, Paul said, "We all," which included himself. He was not at Pentecost or Caesarea so he could not have had reference to Spirit baptism.

Actually, the word "by" in I Corinthians 12:13 should be translated "in." It is "in one spirit" rather than "by one Spirit", or under the guidance or influence of the Spirit, that we are baptized into the Lord's church. The Greek word for "by," I understand, is translated "in" on 1,863 occasions. It is translated "by" only 142 times. This fact makes "in" the preferred translation by far.

We learn from Acts 2:4 that God the Spirit gave the apostles the ability to "speak with other tongues" to other languages. Those who hold to the baptism by the Spirit in our day also hold

to speaking in tongues. The tongue or language they speak in, however, differs from that of the apostles in that it is not a known language. Not one of them speaks in a known language which they have not previously learned. Donald W. Burdick, in fact, in his book, **Tongues to Speak or Not to Speak**, gives seven reasons why the tongues spoken in today is not foreign language speaking. These seven reasons are as follows: (1) the high frequency of repetition in tongues speaking, (2) the similarity of tongues speech to the speaker's language background, (3) the excessive use of one or two vowels, (4) the absence of any language structure, (5) the markedly greater length of the interpretation as compared with the tongue utterance, (6) the inconsistency in interpretation of the same clause or phrase, (7) the predominantly King James style employed in interpretations.

A person informed me that he had been baptized by and filled with the Spirit at a "Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship International" meeting. This person, however, has very little Bible knowledge. One, on the other hand, can be positive that anyone who is filled with the Spirit will be filled with knowledge and wisdom. They won't be ignorant as to the great truth that are set forth in the scriptures. It is as stated in the following scripture:

"Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come" (John 16:13).

I have found that those in the tongues movement have very little truth which obviously means that they don't have the Spirit of truth to guide them. I find, in fact, that they magnify the Spirit rather than the Son.

"And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and in Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God" (Acts 2:5-11).

That which we have just read reminds one of how God caused the animals to arrive on the scene of the ark and enter into it. We can be sure that God caused each person that is mentioned above to be in Jerusalem on this momentous occasion. God made sure that all the countries mentioned were accounted for so that each could convey the message back to

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his homeland. God was about to sow seed and He made sure the proper soil was available for growth and fruit.

It is also obvious that the apostles must have spoken in these various languages for some period of time. We, in fact, learn from Acts 2:6 that their message was "noised abroad;" that is, there was ample time for people to go throughout Jerusalem and inform folks as to what was occurring. Then, there had to be time for these various people to get to the service so as to hear what was said.

This brings us to ask, "What was being said in these foreign languages?" The answer is found in Acts 2:11 where we read: "Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God." The apostles, no doubt, told of the life of Jesus Christ, His sufferings, death, resurrection, ascension, etc. "And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this? Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine." (Acts 2:12-13).

Amazement and doubt often-times go together. We, for example, are amazed by the acts of a magician. We, however, are in doubt as to whether he really did what he appeared to do. We are all prone to doubt that which we do not understand. We, in other words, feel that we have been tricked.

There is always the other group who are more outspoken. They are the group in our text who accused the apostles of being drunk. Those, however, who made this accusation were lacking in the upper story. I make this statement because wine could never give a person the ability to speak in a foreign language. If it did, then perhaps we all should take up drinking. One, if wine did enable one to speak in a foreign language, could advertise wine as having a foreign language in every bottle.

ELIJAH

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unto Mount Horeb, near where God had given the law.

In Horeb, Elijah enters into a cave and hears the Lord speaking to him, "...What doest thou here, Elijah?" (I Kings 19:9). Elijah said he had been very jealous for the Lord and that Israel had forsaken the Lord. Now he was the only one left and they were seeking to take away his life. Then the Lord preached to Elijah by demonstration and, you will remember, there was a great and strong wind, a mighty wind that shook "...the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks..." (I Kings 19:11). Then there was an earthquake and a fire, but the Lord did not speak in those things (was not in them), but then there was "...a still small voice" (I Kings 19:12). God spoke to Elijah in that still small voice.

I believe that by this demonstration, God gave him a very encouraging message. Elijah had seen mighty outward demonstrations of the power of God and yet

those outward demonstrations of power had not turned Israel back to the Lord. Elijah felt that it was useless. He was the only one left and there was no use in going on, but God came to him and pointed out to him that God did not always deal by these mighty outward exercises of power, but that did not mean that He could not get the job done. God could speak in a still small voice. Then God revealed to Elijah that he was not the only one left, but there were seven thousand in Israel who were of the elect of God and had been spoken to by that voice of God and brought to a saving experience by the grace of God. I believe that the Lord used the message of God's election of a people even in the worst of times, and His power to call those people, to encourage Elijah. Then He says to him, "Get out of here and get back to work" (see I Kings 19:15).

Now let's apply this verse of Scripture, first of all, to Elijah. There was a great work that needed to be done. Israel had forsaken the Lord. For many years Israel had followed a false religion, and sin had increased rapidly. The people had turned even from the professed worship of the Lord to open worship of idol gods.

Elijah had been engaged in the work of seeking to turn the people back to the Lord. He had dedicated his life, been actively

engaged and had been used of God in that work. Now he had given up in despondency, left the work undone, fled many miles away from the battlefield and was hiding in a cave. The Lord comes to him and rebuke's him for his departure from the post of duty and hiding away in the cave, and said, "...What doest thou here, Elijah?" (I Kings 19:9). What are you doing here? I did not tell you to come here. The last thing I told you to do was to go and shew yourself unto Ahab. What are you accomplishing in this place? What good are you doing here? Then the Lord encouraged Elijah with God's election and effectual power and commanded him, "Get out of here and get back on the job."

Now, I want to take that story in the life of Elijah, and apply it to you and me personally, individually and practically. Brothers and sisters, there is a great work which needs to be done. There is a need for men and women to live open, influential, godly lives before the world. That is a work and I believe it is one of the greatest needs in the world today, for people who say they are saved, to live the kind of lives before unsaved people that will have some influence and effect on them. I believe the narrow line between the saved and the unsaved, the little difference there is between many of the saved and unsaved, is one of the most hurtful things in the world today in

the work of our Lord Jesus Christ.

You say, "Well, preacher, there is not much I can do. I can't sing, I can't play the piano and I can't teach a class or preach, so there is not much I can do." You can live right before the world. You can live a clean, godly, separated life on your job, in your home and in your neighborhood. That is one of the greatest needs today.

There is also the work of witnessing for Christ Jesus and giving the gospel to unsaved people. We say we believe that people are lost, and they can never be saved without the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Unless someone tells them about Christ Jesus, we say we believe they can never be saved. But sometimes we do not act like we believe that. Every man, woman, boy and girl out there in the world needs to hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. The preacher and the church service reach only a few. If the unsaved people who attend churches where the gospel is preached are the only ones who ever hear the gospel, if everyone of them is saved, there is still going to be a vast majority who are lost. If the preacher would be more faithful, not only in preaching the gospel, but in getting out and giving the gospel to lost people, still there is only going to be a small number who will hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. If all saved people

do not get on the job of telling lost people about our Lord Jesus Christ, then a vast number are going to die and go to hell never having heard the saving gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. There is a work to be done, and there is a need that we be out there in the work.

Then there is the work of teaching the total truth of God's Word to others. Now, beloved friends, we believe some things at our church that the vast majority of even saved people know nothing about. They are not going to attend our services and learn what truths we have to teach. If they learn these things, the people in our church who believe these truths are going to have to get out and teach these truths unto others.

There is a great work that needs to be done. Living a godly life, witnessing to lost people and telling people the truths of the Word of God. Every saved person should be involved in this work. It will be hard enough to get the job done if all of us work. There are some jobs that take everyone doing their part to get them done and still they are hard to do. It is going to be an exceedingly difficult task to do this work if every one of us is as faithful as he can be in doing the work; it will be impossible otherwise. Instead of being out there

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TO WHOM SHALL WE GO

by C.D. Cole

"Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life" (John 6:68).

These are the words of Peter in reply to a question from Christ to His disciples. In the fact of a diminishing audience, Christ said to His disciples, "Will ye also go away?" The fickle multitude who had been following Him for the loaves and fishes, had become offended at His message. The message in particular had emphasized human depravity. He had emphasized the worthlessness of the flesh. He had twice stated that no man could come to Him except the Father give the ability. He had said that there are some of you who believe not. From this many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him. They loved His company no longer. They wanted His bread, but they did not want His doctrine. They wanted food but they did not want to acknowledge their sinfulness. They wanted to be exalted, not realizing that he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

Our Lord was working to bring to pass His prediction that every plant which His heavenly Father had not planted would be rooted up. He was putting to test the profession of discipleship. And He tested it by the word. It was the word that sent them away. In the parable of sower it is said of the stony ground hearer, that he received the word with joy, but that when persecution arose, because of the word he went back. "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you." (John 10:26).

I. The text is a revelation of human helplessness. Man is not self-sufficient, he needs help. Man cannot provide for himself,

either in material or spiritual things; either in temporal or eternal things. Man is lost and like the lost sheep cannot find his way back to God. There must be the seeking shepherd. Man is a sinner and cannot make himself right with his offended Ruler, there must be someone who can make him right with God, so as to avert just punishment for his sins. Man needs someone who will seek and save him.

II. The text suggests that deliverance is in a person. Peter did not ask, to what shall we go, but to whom shall we go? He knew salvation was in a person. Many are trusting in things instead of a person. They go to an ordinance, or ceremony, or a church for salvation. These things are good and proper in their places but are poor substitutes for the Saviour. We go to the church for service and not for salvation. The church is the God ordained agency thru which the saved are to serve.

III. The qualifications for Saviourhood, or what kind of a person we must go to. If salvation is in a person, then we must know what person, we must go to the person who is able and willing to save us.

A. the person to whom we must go must be one who can sympathize with us. He must be a man who has been tested in all points that we have been tested in and who did not sin. "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15). Jesus of Nazareth has this qualification. He hath suffered being tempted and is able to sympathize with us. The story of the temptation of Jesus by Satan is a revelation.

B. He must be a person who

overcame the temptation to sin. Jesus meets this qualification. The story of His temptation is a revelation of His holiness. All the satanic ingenuity was brought to make Him sin. If you want to learn how smart Satan is, study the temptation of Jesus. Immediately after His baptism, Jesus was led of the Spirit, tempted of the devil. The first test was an appeal to His appetite. Jesus was hungry, after 40 days of fasting and it is not wrong to eat. So Satan tried to get Him to make bread and eat. What was wrong in doing that? He would have been taking Himself out of His Father's hands and doing that which pleased Himself. He was led of the Spirit into the place where there was no food and He must look to His Father to provide in that place. He replied that God would provide Him bread in His own way. He met this attack with the shield of faith.

The second test was in the realm of faith. Satan would pervert his faith into fanatical presumption. He took Him to the top of the temple and told him to jump off the top of the temple trust God to take care of Him. What would have been wrong in that? Is it wrong to trust God to take care of us in danger? No, but is it wrong to rush into places of danger just to see if God will take care of us. That would have been to tempt God and Jesus. Ye shall not tempt the Lord your God. If Jesus had been led of the Spirit to the top of the temple and had fallen off, then God would have cared for him. But the devil took Him to the pinnacle of the temple.

The third temptation was to take a short road to power. The devil knew that Jesus was destined to exercise world power. He knew that Jesus was a man of destiny. And he knew that God's

plan for Him was a long, rough, hard road to power. The crown was to come after the cross. But Satan offered Him universal dominion if He would fall down and worship him. He meets this attack by peremptory orders for Satan to go, and by replying that God alone is to be worshipped. Jesus wanted power but He would not get it the devil's way. He took the cross and waited for God to give Him the crown.

C. The person who saves us must have influence at the court of heaven. He must be an attorney who knows how to plead our case. If you had committed some crime what would you do? You would get the best lawyer you could find. If you were innocent of the crime charged you would not be so careful about the lawyer. The fathers of Loeb and Leopold got C. Darrow to defend their boys because their guilt was obvious.

How does Christ influence the court of heaven? Not as Darrow did the human court by an effort to defeat justice. Jesus went to the cross and satisfied justice for His clients and then pleads His death on their behalf.

D. The person who saves us must be one who has no obligations of his own before the law. For this reason an angel could not save us, for every angel is under law and has his own obligations to that law. The good angels have stood by their obedience. For the same reason no mere man on earth or in heaven can save us. The person who saves us must be more than man. Isaiah says, Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils.

ELIJAH

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in the work, the vast majority of saved people are like Elijah. They are hiding in a cave and are not out doing anything, or not much of anything, in the service of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I want to talk to you about some of the caves that people are hiding in. Maybe I can find you in one of them. Maybe I can name the cave that you are hiding in and not doing what you should do in the service of the Lord.

There is the cave of deliberate or ignorant misunderstanding as to one's duty in this work. There is a multitude of saved people who say, "Well, that's the preacher's job and maybe some of the leaders in the church, but that is not my job." My dear friends, there is a multitude of saved people hiding in that cave of misunderstanding about the fact that every saved person is called to be actively engaged in the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. The preacher is simply the leader. He is simply the supervisor who is to encourage you, tell you how to do the work and lay the job out for you. I understand that one of our members is a supervisor on his job. I wonder what he would think if the men who work for him said that they are to just sit around and do nothing but watch him and that he is to do all the work. I do not think he looks at his job like that. I think he is to tell them what to do, lay out the job and see that they get it done. I imagine that Armco Steel would be in bad shape if the people who work there were no more busy about their jobs than most church members are about the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Beloved friends, if most of us worked at our daily jobs like we work at being a Christian, we would have been fired a long time ago. How would you like to have someone work for you, you pay them a good salary and they do not do their job any better than you are doing your job of being what a Christian should be? There are a lot of people hiding in the cave of, "It's not my job, that's the preacher's job."

Another cave that many people are hiding in is the one of indifference and unconcern. They would not argue that it is not their job, but they just do not care if the work gets done or not. You know the Psalmist said, "I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul" (Psalms 142:4). How many people are there in Ashland, Kentucky who are utterly convinced that there is not one person in this city who cares if they go to hell or not? I tell you, beloved friends, we are not as interested in, nor as concerned about, people as we should be. A lot of God's people are hiding in the cave of a lack of interest and concern. You say, "Well, that's not true of me." Well, what are you doing about it? Are you doing anything? Don't say, "I am interested," don't say, "I am concerned," if you are not doing anything about it.

Another cave is the one of being too concerned about other

things. I will never understand this day in which we live. There was a day when women boiled their clothes in a three-legged pot, washed them on a washboard, hung them out to dry on a line, ironed them with a flat iron, cooked biscuits three times a day, kept a garden, kept the house clean, and the men worked all kinds of hours, yet they had time to do some other things. They had time to be good neighbors, to visit and talk to one another about the things of the Lord. We are living in a day when it seems that we do not have time for the one thing that is most important of all. Beloved friends, the trouble is that we are in that cave of being too interested and concerned in too many other things instead of the things that matter most.

There are needful things of life that we have to do. There are some extra things that are alright for us to do. But, beloved friends, unless we find some time to serve God, then we do not have our lives arranged right. Listen, if you do not have time to read your Bible, to pray and visit lost and sick people and talk to them about the Lord Jesus Christ, then you need to rearrange your schedule; you have things out of order and need to check your priorities and rearrange them. We are hiding in the cave of being so busy that we do not have time to do these things that we really should make some time to do.

Then there is the cave of false humility. There are a multitude of God's people who have little talent or time, and they say, "What can I do? What good would it do for me to do anything? There is so little that I could do, that if you take what little I could do away from the total it would not change anything very much." Do you remember which talent man it was who hid his talent? It was the man who had the least talent. He hid that talent and might have said, "Oh, if I had what someone else has, if I had the ability they have, I would really show you what a Christian should be. But I don't have much talent, there is not much I can do, so I won't do anything."

Now, beloved friends, I think that is a major thought in our churches nowadays. What if we have a lot of members who cannot do very much, but what if all of them would do that little bit they could do? What would the total be? What would the total be if everyone would do a little bit? Isn't that the way to get the job done? I have finally started trying, I hope Katie will bear witness to this if you ask her, but I try to keep things picked up and put things away, such as my clothes and shoes. If I see something on the floor, many times I will pick it up. I used to tell our children that if all of us would do a little bit and put away just a few things, Mama would not have so much to do. It is true, isn't it? Well, if everyone in the church would do a little bit, if every member of the church would visit two or three people each week, talk to them about the Lord Jesus Christ and try to get them to come to church, then that would add up to more than the preacher could do if he did all that he could do. But, beloved friends, you say, "Well, I can't do much, and it wouldn't add up to much." You are hiding in a cave. It is a cover-up and cop-out. You are covering up and hiding instead of getting out and doing what

you need to do in the service of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Then, beloved friends, sometimes there is the cave of the devotional as opposed to the practical. There are people who say, "Well, I need to spend my time reading and in studying the Bible. I need to spend my time in prayer." God knows and you know that I am not belittling prayer. I have preached on prayer more than any other subject probably, since I have been here. Sometimes a person will say, "Well, I have to take care of my private devotional life." That is good, as long as you do not hide out in that cave and not get out and also do some work.

You need to read your Bible, to study and to pray, but you also need to get out on the battlefield and do some work for the Lord Jesus Christ. A soldier needs to clean his weapon and see that everything is in order. He needs to check his ammunition and have everything ready, because he will never whip the enemy until he gets out on the front lines. We do need to watch our private lives and build up a good fellowship with the Lord, but, my dear friends, we are not going to get the job done until we get out of the closet, spend some time in the closet, yes, but then get out and get something done for the Lord.

Remember when the three disciples, Peter, James and John, were on the Mount of Transfiguration with the Lord? My, how glorious! What a wonderful experience! The Lord was, transformed before them and Peter said, "Let's stay here and build three tabernacles because it is so good here. I am enjoying this so much; let's stay here." Down in the valley was a man who had a son who was possessed with a devil and needed some help. If the Lord Jesus Christ and the disciples had stayed on the mountain top they would never have been able to help that man down in the valley. They had to come down from the mountain top, into the valley where the people were and where the need was that they might be able to do something good for others and glorify God. Beloved friends, spend some time on the mountain top alone with God in prayer, but don't hide in that cave and never get out and do some service for the Lord.

Then there are some, (maybe some of our folk are tempted, I am in the number,) who will hide in the cave of, "I am too old to do anything like that." Are any of you folks like that? Some of you are getting up in years, is that your excuse? Are you saying, "Well, if I was young like so and so, I would just get out and run all the time and be on the go and do some thing for the Lord?" My dear friends, there is no retirement program in the service of the Lord Jesus Christ. Don't retire from being a Christian. You do not retire when you are sixty, seventy or eighty. You retire when God says, "That's it" and takes you home to glory. There are some things that we should all be doing in the service of the Lord.

Then there is the cave of sin. Sometimes God's people are not out there doing anything because they are too busy living in sin. They are doing things that are wrong and are displeasing to the Lord. Their life is not what it should be and they are hiding in that cave of sin. You know, dear friends, in this matter of being a

CAN YOU IMAGINE THIS?

Dorcas making mini-skirts for the poor at Joppa? "...when he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and shewing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them" (Acts 9:39).

disobedient, back-slidden child of God, you lose the power and do not have the heart to do any good. How can I live in a life-style that I know is displeasing to the Lord and then go out and witness for the Lord? If I know in my heart that I am not doing what is right then I am going to stay in the cave. I am not going to bother going out to serve and witness for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Furthermore, I would not have any influence if I did. If people knew that my life was not what it should be, it would not do any good for me to go out and try to serve God before other people. Listen, you have to make a way for your testimony with the life that you live before the eyes of other people. If they know that your life is not what the life of a child of God ought to be, then you have no influence over them. That is why a lot of people do not witness for the Lord; because they are ashamed to. They know that people know things about them and would be ashamed to tell them about the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, those are some of the caves, not all of them, that people hide in. Out yonder is a job that needs to be done and here we are in the cave doing nothing. God rebukes that situation. He says, "What are you doing in this cave?" "...What doest thou here, Elijah?" (I Kings 19:9) "I sent you to Israel. I sent you to Ahab. I did not send you here. What are you doing in this place? Why aren't you out there on the battlefield?" God comes to us tonight, dear friends, and I hope that the Holy Spirit of God will speak to my heart and to your hearts.

It is a lot easier to hide in a cave than to get out on the battlefield, there is danger, fatigue and problems out there. It is awfully easy to stay in the cave and let someone else get out and do the job. God comes along and says, "What are you accomplishing here?" Elijah accomplished things out yonder, didn't he? You remember when the widow was fed for a long period of time and her son was raised from the dead? You remember when the fire of God came from heaven and when the rain came down? Out yonder Elijah was getting something done, but what did he do in the cave? What did he accomplish in the cave? Nothing.

Beloved friends, what are we doing in the cave for ourselves? Are we growing in grace and knowledge? What are we doing for others? Are we helping and being a blessing to others? What are we doing for the glory of God while we hide away in the caves?

God comes and encourages us to get out and get back to work. God said He has an elect people. God said, He has "...a still small voice" (I Kings 19:12), that will get the job done. But, God uses people to do that job, so we can go out knowing that God will bless our efforts in going forth.

Now listen, God used Elijah further. In I Kings 19:15 God said, "...Go, return..." I want you

to think of those words for several days, "Go, return, get out of here and get back to work." God said that to Elijah.

One of my commentaries said that because Elijah ran from Jezebel, God was through with him, set him aside and did not use him anymore, but that is not true. God still used Elijah. He did not use him in the cave, but when he got out of the cave and back to work, He used him again. You have Elijah anointing Hazael to be king over Syria, Jehu to be king over Israel, Elisha to be prophet (see I Kings 19:15-17), and training Elisha to take his place. You have Elijah bringing a message to Ahab in Naboth's vineyard, bringing a message to Ahaziah and you have him on the mountain when the enemy comes against him and fire comes down from heaven and destroys the enemy. God had some more work for Elijah to do. When he got out of the cave and went back to work, God blessed him and used him some more.

So, dear friends, if you and I will get out of the caves and quit making excuses and putting all of our energy into something else, if we will get out of the caves and on the job, God will bless us, use us and we will grow in grace and knowledge. We will be a blessing to other people and have rewards yonder at the judgment seat of Christ.

Beloved friends, let's think about a message like this. I want to apply it to my own heart and life because I found myself in a couple of those caves. When I was searching and taking the light of the Word of God and looking in those caves, I found myself hiding away many a time in some of them. I am asking God to help me to listen to this message and get out of the caves and get out there and get busy in the work for the Lord. If you do not need this message, I do, and I ask you to pray for me. One of my biggest problems is that I can go into my study and stay all day and enjoy every minute of it, but it is hard for me to get out on the battlefield, in the front line and get to work. You pray that I will do more of that, and I will pray that you will do more of that. Maybe as we pray for one another we will see some results. May the Lord bless the message to your spiritual good is my prayer. May God bless you!

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Cortland, Ohio has relocated. We are now located at the corner of route 305 and Ridge Road. Coming east on route 76 from Akron, Ohio, exit north on route 11 at Girard, continue north toward Astabula. Take the second exit (route 305; Cortland-Hartford) to the right toward Hartford. The church is located at the first intersection, about one-half mile from route 11. Elder Chester Powell is the pastor. A warm welcome is extended to everyone.